

PROCLAMATION
DECLARING APRIL 2022 AS
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

WHEREAS, 1,050 children in Palm Beach County were victims of verified child abuse and neglect in the FY July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021, creating an overall child abuse rate for the county of 3.6 per 1,000, down from the 4.3 per 1,000 rate the previous year; and,

WHEREAS, tragically, two children died from child abuse in Palm Beach County last fiscal year, fewer than the four in the previous year; and

WHEREAS, 47.2 percent of those abused and neglected children are under the age of five, and 71.3 percent of them are under the age of 10; and

WHEREAS, African-American children represent 30.06 percent of children under age five in Palm Beach County, they represent 42.74 percent of the victims of verified child abuse; and

WHEREAS, in the FY 2020-2021 in Palm Beach County, 610 children were removed from abusive homes and sheltered in the foster care system, a 17-percent decrease from the previous year; and

WHEREAS, most of the children who entered out-of-home care did so due to parental substance misuse, which was the most serious removal cause; inadequate supervision, domestic violence and physical injuries also were major removal reasons; and

WHEREAS, there are only 267 active foster homes in 2021 with a bed capacity of 546 in Palm Beach County to care for them – eight fewer homes than in 2020; and

WHEREAS, the number of children placed with relatives and family members increased slightly to 57 percent in 2021; this is the most-preferred placement when a child has to be sheltered from abuse; and

WHEREAS, the misuse of illegal substances continues to contribute to incidents of child abuse and neglect, with 66 children having a verified abuse recorded as substance-exposed newborns, an increase from 50 the previous fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, substance misuse was the verified maltreatment recorded for 416 verified allegations, resulting in the removal of 274 children in FY 2020-2021; and

WHEREAS, Palm Beach County has implemented the Plan of Safe Care initiative in efforts to combat substance misuse in our community to ensure that infants prenatally exposed to the misuse of substances (both legal and illegal) and their families receive the services necessary to advance personal and family recovery and resiliency; and

WHEREAS, prevention remains the best defense for our children and families; and

WHEREAS, protective factors are conditions that reduce or eliminate risk and promote the social, emotional and developmental well-being of children; and

WHEREAS, Palm Beach County organizations and partnerships involved in the child welfare system collaborate with parents, families and the community to strengthen and integrate effective preventive services and build community supports for families and children, and are committed to preventing child abuse;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE COUNCIL OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL OF PALM BEACH COUNTY that the following will be observed:

April 2022 Child Abuse Prevention Month

The foregoing Resolution was offered by Council Member Kathleen Kroll, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Council Member Elisa Cramer, and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Thomas Bean | YES |
| Mike Burke | ABSENT |
| Elisa Cramer | YES |
| Vincent Goodman | ABSENT |
| Kathleen Kroll | YES |
| Jose Luis Rodriguez, Esq. | YES |
| Greg Weiss | ABSENT |
| Debra Robinson, M.D. | YES |
| Thomas P. Weber | YES |

The Chairman thereupon declared the Resolution duly passed and adopted this 6th day of April, 2022.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY

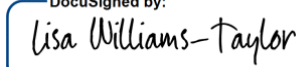
CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

BY: 
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Debra E. Gotlib
Attorney for Children's Services Council
of Palm Beach County

BY: 
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Thomas Bean, Chair

BY: 
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Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer