

PROCLAMATION
DECLARING APRIL 2021 AS
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

WHEREAS, 1,230 children in Palm Beach County were victims of verified child abuse and neglect in 2019-2020, creating an overall child abuse rate for the county of 4.3 per 1,000, slightly below the 4.4 per 1,000 rate the previous year; and,

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

WHEREAS, 46.7 percent of those abused and neglected children are under the age of 5, and nearly 72.8 percent of them are under the age of 10; and

WHEREAS, African-American children represent 28.9 percent of children under age five in Palm Beach County, they represent 45.04 percent of the victims of verified child abuse; and

WHEREAS, this year in Palm Beach County, 735 children were removed from abusive homes and sheltered in the foster care system, a 13.7 percent decrease from the previous year; and

WHEREAS, most of the children who entered out-of-home care did so due to parental substance abuse, which more than doubled as the most-serious removal cause; substance abuse was the verified maltreatment recorded for 314 children, resulting in the removal of 226 children; and

WHEREAS, domestic violence, inadequate supervision, physical injuries, and threatened harm also increased as removal reasons; and

WHEREAS, there are only 275 active foster homes with a bed capacity of 572 in Palm Beach County to care for them – just five more homes than last year; and

WHEREAS, the number of children placed with relatives and family members increased slightly, to 53.6 percent from 53.4 percent last year, which 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 50 children having a verified abuse recorded as substance-exposed newborns; and

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

WHEREAS, children who suffer abuse and neglect are nine times more likely to become involved in criminal activities; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that parents maltreated as children are at higher risk of maltreating their own children, continuing this tragic cycle; and

WHEREAS, toxic stress that stems from abuse can damage young children's developing brains, create learning and behavioral problems and hinder their future achievements, which has huge implications for our whole community.

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

April 2021 Child Abuse Prevention Month

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

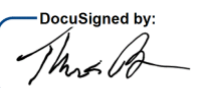
The Chairman thereupon declared the Resolution duly passed and adopted this 25th day of March, 2021.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY


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

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

BY:  _____
0AFA6A0B47B64DE

Thomas Bean, Chair

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