

Media Inquiries:

(630) 221-7374
media@dupagehealth.org

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April 7, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Help Strengthen Families and Prevent Child Abuse

DuPage County - The DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) is using today, Wear Blue Day and National Child Abuse Prevention Month this April, to encourage parents to make DuPage County a better place for children and families.

Wearing blue today raises awareness and encourages others to support child abuse prevention and connects individuals together across the county who also support child abuse prevention efforts, strong families, and healthy children.

By ensuring individuals have the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to care for children, we can help promote the social and emotional well-being of children and youth and prevent child maltreatment within families and communities.

“According to Kids Count Data Center, last year there were 393 children placed in substitute care away from their families due to child abuse or neglect in DuPage County, a 19% increase from 2020,” said Karen Ayala, Executive Director, DuPage County Health Department. “When we invest in children, we are investing in our communities and our futures.”

April is a time to focus on the important role that communities play in protecting children. Everyone’s participation is critical. Let’s work together to commit to effective strategies that support families and prevent child abuse and neglect.

As a community, take action to prevent child abuse by:

- Reporting suspected abuse to the appropriate authorities
- Educating ourselves and others on the signs of abuse and how to prevent it
- Supporting families in need and providing them with resources and services
- Offering a smile or kind words to parents and caregivers we encounter who are working hard to support their children
- Advocating for policies and programs that protect children and prevent abuse

DCHD supports the children placed in substitute care through the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), with the Health Works program. Health Works skilled Case Managers offer comprehensive medical case management, and support to foster families within DuPage County.

Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

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In addition, through the Healthy Families DuPage program, DCHD's highly trained Case Managers follow the research-based Healthy Families America program model to provide home visiting services, that help new and expectant parents strengthen their family's functioning and reduce their risk for child abuse and/or neglect. This prevention program works to improve the safety of children while providing support to the family and connecting them to community resources.

Case Managers help new moms and dads be better parents by teaching them:

- How babies grow and develop
- How to keep babies safe and healthy
- Good parenting skills

If you are expecting a baby or are a new parent, you may be eligible for the Healthy Families DuPage program. If you or someone you know is interested in enrolling, contact us at 630-682-7400 or visit our website [here](#) to learn more.

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