



# Board of Commissioners

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Commissioners Proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Lake County

PAINESVILLE, Ohio, March 26, 2026— April is recognized nationwide as Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness and strengthening community efforts to support children and families, especially during challenging times. Child abuse and neglect affect all communities, regardless of culture, race, or socioeconomic status, and Lake County is no exception. In 2025, the Children and Adult Services Division of the Lake County Department of Job and Family Services responded to nearly 1,500 calls concerning child safety and provided services to approximately 1,000 children with a wide range of needs.

The Lake County Board of Commissioners continues to support the Department’s mission to ensure that every child grows up in a safe, stable, and nurturing environment. On March 26, 2026, the Board formally adopted a resolution designating April 2026 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Lake County.

“Protecting children starts with strengthening families and building a community where people feel supported and connected,” said Commission President Morris W. Beverage III. “When we invest in prevention and early intervention, we create a safer future for every child in Lake County.”

“Child abuse prevention is not just the responsibility of one agency, it requires awareness and action from the entire community,” said Commissioner John T. Plecnik. “By working together and staying vigilant, we can help ensure children are protected and families receive the help they need.”

“Every child deserves to grow up in a safe and nurturing environment, and it’s up to all of us to help make that a reality,” said Commissioner Morgan R. McIntosh. “This month is an important opportunity to educate, engage, and remind residents that their voice can make a difference in a child’s life.”

“April is recognized nationwide as Child Abuse Prevention Month—a meaningful reminder of the power of community. We extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who helps raise awareness, supports families, and takes action by reporting concerns of child abuse and neglect. Your vigilance and concern play a vital role in ensuring that every child has the opportunity to grow up safe, supported, and protected in Lake County,” said Job and Family Services Director Suzanne Casar.



*From the left: Commissioner John T. Plecnik, Suzanne Casar, Alison Tomaselli, Mary Udics, Commissioner Morgan R. McIntosh.*

The Lake County Department of Job and Family Services remains committed to promoting awareness and prevention efforts throughout the community. As part of this initiative, the Department distributes blue wristbands and blue ribbon pins to residents and organizations, and partners with local municipalities to encourage the adoption of similar proclamations.

On April 8, 2026, Department staff will plant blue and silver pinwheels in front of the Job and Family Services building. These pinwheels serve as a powerful visual reminder that every child deserves a healthy, safe, and supportive childhood. April 8 is also recognized as Wear Blue to Work Day, a statewide campaign encouraging Ohioans to show their support for child abuse prevention by wearing blue.

The Lake County Department of Job and Family Services offers training programs for various groups, including educators, childcare providers, and mental health organizations, on how to recognize and report suspected child abuse and neglect. For more information about these opportunities, please contact Mary Udics at 440-350-4333.

Anyone who suspects that a child in Lake County is being abused or neglected should report their concerns to the 24-hour child abuse hotline at 440-350-4000, option 1.

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