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**Proclamation:
Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month, April 2021**

FILED FOR RECORD
at 2:30 o'clock
MAR 23 2021
By JENNIFER LINDENZWEIG
Court Clerk, Hunt County, TX

WHEREAS, 66,382 cases of child abuse were confirmed in Texas in 2019;

WHEREAS, each day in Texas, 187 children are confirmed victims of child abuse;

WHEREAS, every 8 minutes in Texas, there is at least one confirmed case of child abuse;

WHEREAS, every week in Texas, on average, more than 4 children die from abuse or neglect;

WHEREAS, last year in Texas, a total of 51,417 children were in the legal care of the state for their own protection.

WHEREAS, in Texas and throughout the nation, there are many individuals and agencies who are working to prevent child abuse, to raise awareness about child abuse, and to help the child victims.

WHEREAS, in fiscal year 2019, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services served a total of 356,030 children who, by no fault of their own, became involved with the DFPS' Child Protective Services due to allegations and confirmed cases of child abuse or neglect.

WHEREAS, in Hunt County in 2019, Child Protective Services conducted 672 investigations of child abuse and/or neglect;

WHEREAS, in Hunt County, Child Protective Services worked with, on average, 153 children and their families each month of 2019;

WHEREAS, last year in Texas, a total of 11,066 Court Appointed Special Advocates® – or CASA volunteers – who are assigned by the court to speak up for a child's best interest,

WHEREAS, last year, CASA volunteers involved with one of the 72 CASA programs in Texas advocated for 29,229 children in foster care system, giving over 2 million volunteer hours to serve these child victims;

WHEREAS, in Hunt County, CASA volunteers advocated for 271 children last year, serving 100 percent of the Hunt County children who were placed into the foster care system;

WHEREAS, CASA for Hunt County volunteers gave just over 3,300 hours and 11,460 miles in order to serve the children in which they are appointed, saving Hunt County taxpayers about \$105,000 with volunteer services;

WHEREAS, Children’s Advocacy Center – CAC – is the front door for the child abuse investigation process to provide a collaborative response to children impacted by abuse; last year in Texas 73 Children’s Advocacy Centers across the state served more than 59,000 children each year;

WHEREAS, in 2020, every 15 hours there was a confirmed child sexual abuse case;

WHEREAS, 98 percent of the child victims knew their alleged perpetrator.

WHEREAS, every child through the CAC has a chance for their voice to be heard and the healing process to begin; and in Hunt County, CAC staff and volunteers served 505 children last year;

WHEREAS, child abuse and neglect is a serious problem affecting every segment of our community, and finding solutions requires input and action from everyone in our community; and

WHEREAS, our children are our most valuable resources and will shape the future of Texas; and

WHEREAS, child abuse can have long-term psychological, emotional, and physical effects that can have lifelong consequences for victims of abuse; and

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

WHEREAS, effective child abuse prevention activities succeed because of the meaningful connections and partnerships created between child welfare, education, health, community- and faith-based organizations, businesses and law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, communities must make every effort to promote programs and activities that benefit children and their families;

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that we must work together as a community to increase awareness about child abuse and contribute to promote the social and emotional well-being of children and families in a safe, stable, nurturing environment.

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

WHEREAS, the impact of abuse and neglect has long-term personal, economic and social costs; therefore, hurting Texas’ future;

WHEREAS, CASA for Hunt County, Hunt County Children’s Advocacy Center, Hunt County’s Child Protective Services, foster parents, teachers, counselors, attorneys, judges and others work to

ensure that children in our community have the opportunity to grow up in safe, loving permanent homes;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bobby W. Stovall, County Judge for Hunt County, Texas, do hereby proclaim April 2021 as NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION and AWARENESS MONTH in Hunt County and urge all citizens to recognize this month by dedicating ourselves to the task of improving the quality of life for all children and families.

Signed on the 23 day of March, 2021

Bobby W. Stovall
Name
Hunt County Judge
Title

