

FILED FOR RECORD
at 2:00'clock p M

Proclamation: 18,700
Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month, April 2024

MAR 26 2024

By BECKY LANDRUM
County Clerk, Hunt County, Tex.

WHEREAS, each day in Texas, 159 children were confirmed victims of child abuse in 2023; which is a confirmed victim of child abuse every 9 minutes;

WHEREAS, in 2023 in Texas, a total of 49,684 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 2023, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services became involved with hundreds of thousands of children and their families due to allegations and confirmed cases of child abuse or neglect;

WHEREAS, in 2023, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services investigated 163,855 referrals of abuse and neglect of children;

WHEREAS, in 2023, Hunt County's Child Protective Investigations engaged in 1,956 cases involving Hunt County children in 2023;

WHEREAS, the number of Hunt County children who were placed into the care and custody of the state was 118 children in 2023;

WHEREAS, in 2023 in Texas, there were total of 8,281 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 73 CASA programs in Texas advocated for 20,169 children in foster care system, giving 1.8 million volunteer hours to serve these child victims;

WHEREAS, in Hunt County, CASA volunteers advocated for 118 children last year, serving 100 percent of the Hunt County children who were placed into the foster care system;

WHEREAS, in 2023, CASA for Hunt County volunteers gave 12,085 hours and traveled 46,010 miles in order to serve the children in which they are appointed, saving Hunt County taxpayers about \$347,000 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 70 Children's Advocacy Centers across the state served more than 64,938 children each year, with 45% between ages of 6 and 12 years old;

WHEREAS, in 2023, approximately 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 700 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;

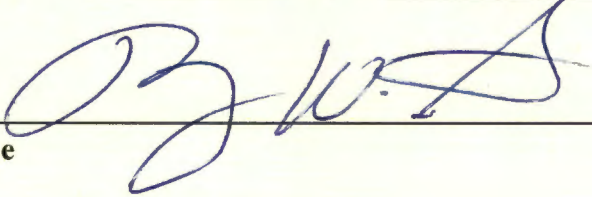
WHEREAS, the impact of abuse and neglect has long-term personal, economic and social costs; therefore, hurting Texas' future;

WHEREAS, CASA for Hunt County, Hunt County Children's Advocacy Center, Hunt County's Child Protective Services, foster parents, teachers, counselors, attorneys, judges and many 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 2024 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 26th day of March, 2024

Name



Title

County Judge

