

2024 CAP Month MM Op-Ed 594 words

Children who live in families with access to economic and concrete supports are less likely to experience abuse and neglect. And science shows that positive childhood experiences—like loving caregivers and safe, stable, and nurturing relationships—can help mitigate the negative impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACES). And it's not just the parent or caregiver's responsibility to provide this environment. We all have a responsibility to ensure children have positive experiences, and help families access the resources they need, when they need them, before they are in crisis.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Month, a time when Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) America and its nationwide network of state chapters and partners connect with families, communities, prevention advocates, and supporters to build a narrative of hope for children and families through collaboration and the creation of an ecosystem of primary prevention. [The White House's 2024 CAP Month proclamation](#) acknowledges the need for us to collectively lift up families so that all children grow up in healthy environments. Expanding on this idea, PCA America's theme for the 2024 CAP Month campaign is **"Building A Hopeful Future, Together."**

Guided by strategies rooted in both science and aspiration, PCA America supports initiatives like home visiting, which is proven to help families cope with trauma and stress that so many families encounter every day. Sometimes, overburdened parents and caregivers may be unable to provide the necessary care and support to their children and simply need help. PCA America's signature program, Healthy Families America (HFA), provides home visiting services that can be the glue to help families stick together as they navigate the questions, concerns, and challenges that can often overwhelm parents during pregnancy and the first few years of their child's life. HFA completes more than 1 million home visits every year.

PCA America chapters bring state-level expertise to the work of prevention, amplifying and advocating for resources to make a real and lasting impact in their communities. They ensure that statewide partners, supporters and local governments are empowered with the data and powerful thought-leadership to advance critical policies and fund family-strengthening programming. Here in [state, chapter name] has successfully [insert program or policy highlight].

We are actively building a hopeful future by creating an ecosystem of prevention that does not currently exist. This will require the work of our network and yours. You can join us in this work to protect children, our nation's most vulnerable members.

PCA America's nationwide **Digital Advocacy Day** on **April 16th** provides an opportunity to unite our advocacy efforts during CAP Month. Together, let's ask Congress to prioritize kids and invest in more family-strengthening policies, economic supports, and community-based child abuse prevention programs at the national, state, and local levels. You can also take action throughout the year to advance equitable, responsive, and effective systems that ensure all children and families are healthy and thriving. Visit [PCA America's Policy Action Center](#) for opportunities to reach out to your members of Congress and advocate for timely appropriations to families and children.

Prevention is hard work, but it is also heart work. Our goal is to provide hope and help to ALL families through our chapter network, home visiting programs, prevention research and policies, and awareness efforts like CAP Month. We believe there are enough of us who believe in fairness, equity, and the vision of a great future for all children. The work of love is never done. **Together, we can prevent child abuse, America...because childhood lasts a lifetime.** Learn more about PCA America at preventchildabuse.org.