***Insert organization’s logo***

**Contact Information:**
***Name***

***Organization***

***Phone number***

***Email address***

***(DATE)***

**Press Release**

*For Immediate Release*

***(County/Community)* recognizes that Connections Matter® in strong and healthy communities.**

Child Abuse Prevention Month raises awareness of the role caring connections play in strengthening communities.

(Organization/group) and Prevent Child Abuse Iowa are joining communities across the state this month in celebrating the importance of social connections and working to strengthen social well-being, a key indicator of overall health and an essential factor in preventing child abuse and neglect.

To promote caring connections and strong communities during Child Abuse Prevention Month, (name of organization/group) will (activity planned) on (time, date).

“We will be at (location) on (date) to bring attention to the simple ways you and I can create caring connections in our community,” said (spokesperson name, title). “Our children are our future and if we take action not just in April but every day, we can go a long way toward creating stronger communities where abuse and neglect never occur.”

Child abuse and neglect can cause toxic levels of stress that over time, changes the structure of the developing brain and leads to poor health, learning, and overall well-being. An Iowa study found that more than half of Iowa adults have experienced at least one type of abuse or household dysfunction growing up. Significant levels of toxic stress in childhood increases the likelihood of problems throughout a lifetime including depression, diabetes and heart disease.

However, social supports and caring connections strengthen families, mitigating the negative outcomes of childhood trauma and reduces the risk of child abuse or neglect. Connected communities have lower crime rates, better physical and mental health, and less money is spent on treating social problems.

(Organization/group) works to prevent child abuse by (explain how your prevention activities help strengthen families or support children). The program name reaches (number of children/parents) each year, creating the connections (community name)’s children need to grow into healthy adults.

During April, (Organization name) invites community members to get involved by (provide more details about your Prevention Month campaign activities and how people can get involved. Explain how this correlates to preventing child abuse in your region of the state.)

“Fostering resilience can take many shapes in a community,” says Liz Cox, executive director of Prevent Child Abuse Iowa. “By creating an environment where people understand toxic stress and its impact, leaders can destigmatize the effects of toxic stress and foster strong caring connections that lead to positive outcomes across generations.”

Community members can take action for child abuse prevention year-round by (offer a couple of actions people can take to support your work throughout the year and how they can follow up about these opportunities.)

The Connections Matter® framework provides a strengths-based approach to understanding adverse childhood experiences and the vital role caring relationships play in buffering the long-term negative outcomes. Information on Connections Matter® is available through Prevent Child Abuse Iowa or by visiting [www.becauseconnectionsmatter.org](http://www.becauseconnectionsmatter.org).

###

**About (Name of your organization)**

Include information about your council/organization such as:

* When it was founded
* Who it serves
* Programs it administers
* Its mission
* Contact information such as phone number and website

**About Prevent Child Abuse Iowa/Connections Matter**

Since 1975, Prevent Child Abuse Iowa has served its mission of leading child abuse prevention efforts in Iowa by building awareness, providing assistance, and promoting advocacy. It is the only statewide organization dedicated to preventing child abuse and the only consistent voice for child abuse prevention during the state legislative session. Prevent Child Abuse Iowa manages state and federal grant programs that contribute financial support to community groups that provide services to families. Prevent Child Abuse Iowa is based in Des Moines, but has partnerships in nearly every county throughout Iowa. It is an affiliate of Prevent Child Abuse America. For more information, call (515) 244.2200, or visit [*www.pcaiowa.org*](http://www.pcaiowa.org).

###