



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Media Contact

Madlynn Ruble  
Colorado Department of Human Services  
303.253.4047  
[madlynn.ruble@state.co.us](mailto:madlynn.ruble@state.co.us)

## Drop in Calls to the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline Expected this Summer

*Community focus on five protective factors can reduce likelihood of child maltreatment*

**DENVER, May 22, 2023** - As summer approaches, child welfare advocates are calling on all Colorado residents to learn how they can help strengthen families in their communities. When the school year ends and summer break begins, calls to the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline drop significantly because teachers and other school-based mandatory reporters are no longer interacting with children every day. As always, individuals should call the CO4Kids Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (1-844-CO-4-Kids or 844-264-5437) if they are concerned a child may be experiencing abuse or neglect.

“It is important that we all do what we can to strengthen families, which is the most effective way to prevent child abuse and neglect from occurring,” said Minna Castillo Cohen, director of the Office of Children, Youth and Families at the Colorado Department of Human Services. “The five protective factors are the foundation of the Strengthening Families approach. If they are in place for a family, the likelihood of child maltreatment decreases and parents are able to access resources, supports and coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress.”

The [five protective factors](#) include:

1. **Parental Resilience** - Parents who can cope with the stresses of everyday life, as well as an occasional crisis, have resilience.
2. **Social Connections** - When parents have a social network of supportive friends, family and neighbors they can turn to for emotional support or advice it is easier to care for their children and themselves.
3. **Concrete Supports** - Families who can meet their basic needs for food, clothing, housing and transportation – and who know how to access essential services such as childcare, health care, and mental health services – are better able to ensure the safety and well-being of their children.
4. **Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development** - Healthy child development and effective parenting are strongly linked. Children thrive when parents provide affection, respectful communication and listening, consistent rules and expectations, and safe opportunities that promote independence.
5. **Social and Emotional Competence of Children** - Parents support healthy social and emotional development in children when they model how to express and communicate emotions effectively, self-regulate and make friends.

Community members, friends, family and neighbors can help bolster these five protective factors for families in their community in many ways, including being a sympathetic listener and sharing healthy



parenting strategies, helping parents identify and access resources in their community such as parent support groups, and volunteering for or donating to organizations that provide concrete supports to families, like food pantries. A list of more ways to make a difference can be found [here](#).

A call to the hotline could connect a family to needed resources. Last year the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline system received 209,513 calls. Local county social services agencies assessed the safety and well-being of 50,699 children and youth in Colorado. In most situations, counties are able to successfully work with families to connect them with resources and avoid out-of-home care. In fact, in 97% of child welfare assessments of abuse and neglect, children and youth are able to remain at home while their families receive services.

Every parent needs help from time to time. For parents and caregivers in need of additional support, Family Resource Centers are available across the state to strengthen families. [Find the closest Family Resource Center online](#). More information and resources can be found on the [CO4Kids website](#).

###

### **About CO4Kids**

*The Colorado Department of Human Services CO4Kids campaign encourages all Coloradans to strengthen families and communities. To learn about the signs of child abuse and neglect and for information about how to become a foster or adoptive parent, visit [CO4Kids.org](http://CO4Kids.org). Call 844-CO-4-Kids to report concerns about child abuse and neglect. If a child or teen is in immediate danger, dial 9-1-1.*

