



NEWS RELEASE

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Community Remembers Children Affected by Abuse

Wake County residents gathered at Pullen Park today to commemorate April as Child Abuse Prevention month.

“Child abuse is tragic and heartbreaking,” said Dr. James West, chairman of the Wake County Board of Commissioners. “It is a social problem that threatens the youngest and most vulnerable members of our community, and we all play a role in preventing it from happening.”

In 2015, 24 children in North Carolina died from child abuse or neglect. Those who attended this morning’s event stood somberly as the names of the victims were read aloud.

Following the reading, attendees planted pinwheels to serve as recognizable symbols of Child Abuse Prevention Month. The pinwheel planting is part of a national campaign to create awareness of the role all adults play in the healthy development and growth of our nation’s children.

The event also featured informational booths to connect parents with the resources they need to provide safe, stable, nurturing homes for their children.

Studies demonstrate that child abuse, like any other trauma, is associated with poor physical health and mental health outcomes in children and their families. These negative effects can last a lifetime.

Research shows that when [protective factors](#) are present, the risk for neglect and abuse diminish. These attributes serve as buffers, helping parents find resources, support or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress. Protective factors include:

- **Parents’ ability to cope with stress.** When feeling stressed, parents should take a few deep breaths and allow their bodies to relax while thinking of a place where they feel happy.

- **Small acts of kindness, protection and caring.** Parents can foster nurturing relationships with their children by having a family game night or completing simple crafts together.
- **Knowledge of child development and parenting skills.** Parenting groups or classes provide a forum to share ideas and learn new parenting strategies.
- **Maintaining social connections.** Organizing regular potluck dinners or participating in workshops can help parents foster relationships with emotionally supportive friends, family and neighbors.
- **Accessing resources to meet basic needs.** Parents who need assistance meeting their families' basic needs for food, clothing, housing and transportation can visit the [Human Services website](#) to learn more about the many services available to Wake County residents.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. This month and throughout the year, Wake County encourages all individuals and organizations to play a role in making our community a better place for children and families. To learn more, please visit our [website](#) or call the Child Welfare Office at 919-212-7474.

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