

# Proclamation



*Jane Castor, Mayor*

**WHEREAS**, all children have the right to grow and reach their full potential in a safe and secure home and neighborhood, and it is incumbent on each resident in our city to value, support, and advocate for children and their well-being, and the future prosperity of Hillsborough County, Florida depends on maintaining the healthy development of the over 300,000 children currently living, growing, and learning within our diverse community, and research shows that parents and caregivers who have social networks and know how to seek help in times of trouble are more resilient and better able to provide safe environments and nurturing experiences for their children; and

**WHEREAS**, in early childhood, traumatic events of abuse, domestic violence, divorce, incarcerated parents or caregivers, and neglect can have long term negative effects on the health and well-being of children, and it is vital that communities work together to increase awareness about child abuse and how to stop it because prevention remains the best defense, and it takes a collaborative effort among neighbors, community groups, faith-based organizations, schools, businesses, law enforcement, the courts, government agencies, and all of us to succeed in these efforts, and state law requires that any person that is aware or suspects child abuse or neglect by a parent or legal guardian needs to report such information to the Florida Department of Children and Families; and

**WHEREAS**, during the COVID-19 pandemic, stay-at-home mandates have had a negative impact on the social safety nets for children in schools, neighborhoods, family gatherings, places of worship, and other public spaces that have traditionally been environments where children and families are nurtured and cared for, and with more people at home, along with the added stress of job loss and other pandemic issues, anxieties could be an unfortunate contributing factor to an increase in cases of child abuse and neglect; and

**WHEREAS**, the **Children's Board of Hillsborough County**, established in 1988, strives to invest in partnerships and quality programs to support the success of all children and families in the community, and the organization is committed to child abuse prevention, and advocates for educational, emotional, physical and social prosperity for children to ensure they are healthy, safe, developmentally on track, and ready to learn and succeed; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Department of Children and Families and the Children's Board of Hillsborough County in collaboration with Prevent Child Abuse Florida's *Pinnwheels for Prevention Campaign* are engaging communities throughout Hillsborough County in a coordinated effort to prevent child abuse and neglect by promoting awareness of healthy child development, positive parenting practices, and types of concrete support families need, especially during **Child Abuse Prevention Month**, held annually in April.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim the month of April 2021 as

**"CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH"**

in the city of Tampa, Florida and call upon all individuals and organizations to make children a top priority and to ensure that every child grows and reaches their full potential in safe and secure environments.

Dated in Tampa, Florida this 1<sup>st</sup> day of April 2021.



*Jane Castor*  
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Mayor