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ACR-178 Child Abuse Prevention Month. (2023-2024)

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 178

CHAPTER 73

Relative to Child Abuse Prevention Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State May 30, 2024.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 178, Jackson. Child Abuse Prevention Month.

This measure would acknowledge the month of April 2024 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in California.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, Preventing child abuse and neglect means strengthening families so that their children can thrive; and

WHEREAS, Child abuse and neglect continue to pose serious threats to our nation's children; and

WHEREAS, In 2022, according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, 50,869 children in California were found to be victims of abuse or neglect; and

WHEREAS, In 2022, according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, 164 children in California died as a result of child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, Children who have been abused or neglected have a higher risk of developing various health problems as adults, including alcoholism, depression, drug abuse, eating disorders, obesity, suicide, and certain chronic diseases; and

WHEREAS, California's children deserve to grow up in a safe and nurturing environment free from fear, abuse, and neglect; and

WHEREAS, Statewide, child abuse and neglect cases disproportionately involve children of color; and

WHEREAS, Effective programs succeed because of partnerships among human service agencies, community-based organizations, schools, faith-based organizations, law enforcement, and the business community; and

WHEREAS, Family Resource Centers continue to play a key role in preventing child abuse and neglect in their communities by being a community-based, family-focused, and culturally sensitive collaborative organization that provides programs and services based on the needs of the families; and

WHEREAS, Child abuse and neglect have long-term economic and societal costs; and

WHEREAS, Maltreated children are 77 percent more likely to require special education than nonmaltreated children; and

WHEREAS, Maltreated children are 59 percent more likely to be arrested as juveniles than their nonmaltreated peers; and

WHEREAS, Long-term health care costs for adult survivors of childhood physical and sexual abuse were 21 percent higher than for nonvictims; and

WHEREAS, Adolescent survivors of child maltreatment were twice as likely to be unemployed as adults than their nonmaltreated peers and are more likely to receive public assistance; and

WHEREAS, By one well-respected prevalence estimate, 11.5 percent of all children experience child maltreatment in any given year, which implies that the total economic burden in California could be as high as \$284 billion; and

WHEREAS, Providing community-based prevention services to families whose children may be at risk of child abuse or neglect is less costly than addressing the emotional and physical damage that can result from child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, Providing community-based prevention services to those families can help avoid the costs of protective services, law enforcement, the judicial system, foster care, and the treatment of adults recovering from abuse as children; and

WHEREAS, Victims of child abuse, whether the abuse is physical, sexual, or emotional, or any combination of these, should have access to a safe place to live, appropriate medical care, and counseling or mental health services; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, Prevent Child Abuse America, the Child Abuse Prevention Center, the California Family Resource Association, and other groups have organized campaigns to increase public awareness of child abuse and to promote ways to prevent child abuse; and

WHEREAS, Each year, the President of the United States issues a proclamation announcing April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month; and

WHEREAS, Pinwheels are displayed to increase the awareness of child abuse and to focus on the positive message of preventing child abuse and neglect by supporting families and strengthening communities during Child Abuse Prevention Month; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature does hereby acknowledge the month of April 2024 as Child Abuse Prevention Month and encourages the people of the State of California to work together to support youth-serving child-abuse prevention activities in their communities and schools during that month and throughout the year; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.