

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 24, 2022

STARK COUNTY DECLARES APRIL AS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Canton, Ohio - Stark County Commissioners Bill Smith, Janet Weir Creighton, and Richard Regula have declared April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Commissioners presented a proclamation on Wednesday, March 23, 2022 to Deborah Forkas, M.Ed, Executive Director of Stark County Job and Family Services and Robert Myers, LISW-S, Deputy Director of Children Services.

National Child Abuse Prevention Month is recognized to raise awareness about child abuse and strengthen families. Child abuse and neglect are serious problems affecting every segment of our community. In 2021, Stark County received 6,510 reports of abuse or neglect through the Division of Children Services' abuse hotline. The reports resulted in 2,614 cases requiring assistance or intervention.

Children who have been subjected to abuse and neglect may develop long-term psychological, emotional, and physical effects. Prevention and awareness efforts in our community can help children succeed by encouraging families to build safe, stable, and nurturing environments.

Stark County Job and Family Services has partnered with Project KARE to promote Wear Blue Day on Wednesday, April 13, 2022. Wear Blue Day encourages residents to wear blue to work, school, or a community event. Those who wear blue are invited to share their photos with Job and Family Services by emailing them to Stephen.Rowland@jfs.ohio.gov or posting them to social media using the tag #StarkWearsBlue.

If you are concerned that a child is being abused or neglected, please call (330) 455-KIDS (5437) and ask to speak to a referral specialist. The line is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.



Stark County Commissioners issue proclamation to Job and Family Services. Left to right: Robert Myers, LISW-S, Deputy Director of Children Services; Commissioners Richard Regula, Bill Smith, and Janet Weir Creighton; Deborah Forkas, M.Ed, Executive Director of Stark County Job and Family Services.