



April
2025

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April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month



Greetings!

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time for us to unite in our commitment to protect the children in our community. At the **Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center**, we believe in the power of prevention—stopping abuse before it can ever happen.

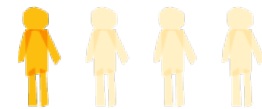
Why does this matter?

95% of child abuse is preventable through education—it's about stopping it before it starts. By equipping children with the knowledge and tools to recognize red flags, understand boundaries, and trust their instincts, we give them the ability to speak up and seek help when they need it most. Teaching educators and caregivers on creating safe spaces and supportive environments also helps to correct problems before they even exist.

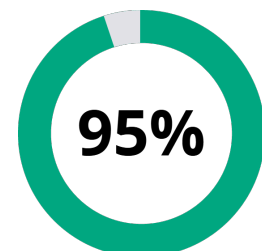
What are we doing?

Throughout the month of April and all year long, we are committed to empowering the next generation through education and awareness. Our dedicated prevention team goes into schools across Okaloosa and Walton Counties, providing age-appropriate lessons and interactive workshops that cover topics like personal safety, consent, and healthy relationships. We help students learn

Child Abuse Stats:



30 children are abused
EACH WEEK
in Okaloosa &
Walton Counties



how to identify warning signs of abuse and encourage them to reach out to trusted adults when they feel unsafe. But it doesn't stop there—our efforts also extend to the teachers, parents, and caregivers who are integral to creating a safe and supportive environment for our children. Since we know that **95% of child abuse is preventable through education**, we try to reach the child and adult before abuse starts.

Who is making this happen?

Our Community Outreach Advocates are the heart of our prevention program. Through the Monique Burr Foundation Safety Program, they've been working tirelessly since 2017 to provide in-person training and education to children in our local school districts. **In 2024 alone, 17,367 students received safety training lessons**, helping them to recognize the signs of abuse and empowering them to speak out. Thanks to our outreach advocates, we've seen numerous disclosures of abuse and have made a significant impact in the lives of many children in Okaloosa and Walton counties.

How you can help:

As we continue this critical work, we need your support to keep the mission going. **Join us by becoming a member, partnering with us in some way, volunteering for an event, or making a donation.** By supporting prevention efforts, we are building a better, healthier future for our children—one where every child is given the tools to recognize, resist, and report abuse. We cannot do this work without the continued support of caring individuals like you. Together, we can help create a future where every child grows up feeling safe, valued, and protected.

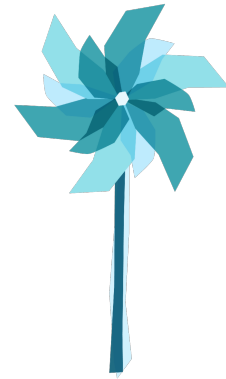
Thank you for your unwavering support in this critical mission.

Warm regards,
Julie Porterfield, CEO

**95% of child abuse
is preventable
by education**



17,367 students
received
Safety Matters
education in 2024



Please visit eccac.org
for more information on
prevention

Join Us For Proclamations & Spirit Week!

Celebrate with Us!

You're cordially invited to join us for an exciting event at two of our locations! We will be hosting proclamations from city leaders and reinstating our spirit to fight against child abuse.

**Julie Sacco Porterfield Children's
Advocacy Center**

Monday, April 21, 10:00 a.m.
401 McEwen Drive, Niceville FL
Reading of the Proclamation

Join us for Spirit Week



Heroes Speak Up, Be A Hero!

**MON
APR 21**

Be A Hero!
Dress up as your favorite superhero!



**TUE
APR 22**

Signal The Fight!
Wear ALL Blue!

Thanks for your ongoing support to help end child abuse!

**WED
APR 23**

Sock It To Child Abuse!
Wear Crazy socks!

Remember to post pictures of your Spirit Week attire using: #ECCACGOBLUE

**THUR
APR 24**

Stomp Out Child Abuse!
Register to walk with us - Laurenskidswalk.org

**FRI
APR 25**

Side Kicks Against Abuse!
Dress Up exactly alike someone else!



Pierce Family Children's Advocacy Center

Friday, April 25, 10:00 a.m.
336 College Avenue, DFS FL
Reading of the Proclamation
by Chief Dustin Cosson, Walton Co.

2025 Gala & Golf Weekend!



THANK YOU to EVERYONE!

We want to say **thank you** to everyone who attended our gala and golf tournament this past weekend, as well as to those who supported the event in any way. Your generosity has helped us raise crucial funds for our precious kids, and we are beyond grateful for your support. Your contribution truly means the world to us!

We look forward to seeing you next year and sincerely thank you for your continued support!

Save The Date: March 7th & 8th, 2026

Here are the dates for the auction lot dinners!

- **Bubbles & Bunco** - Wednesday, October 8th at Vin'tij; hosted by Cindy Cole
- **Chars & Cigars** - Wednesday, October 8th at The Pierce Residence
- **Savor The Sunset** - Wednesday, October 22nd at The Swanson Residence
- **Tour di Italia** - Saturday, November 1st at The Lichorwic Residence

Thank you to the hosts of these events - we can't wait to enjoy fine dining and fellowship with you all!



5th Annual Zeke Bratkowski Award

Zeke Bratkowski was a professional football quarterback, and later NFL coach. After his retirement, Bratkowski lived in Northwest Florida and was a major supporter and spokesperson for ECCAC before he passed away in 2019. He was also responsible for the beginning of ECCAC's annual signature event, now in its 27th year, the Gala & Golf Weekend.

We are very proud to present this year's award to two very deserving couples, for their remarkable dedication to the community and children in need - **Jim and Tammy Pierce and Mike and Valerie**





Join Us For An Event!



Join us for a memorable weekend April 4-5th in which we are one of the local beneficiaries. The weekend was created to carry out the vision of founders and co-chairs Mike “Chi Chi” and Valerie Thompson.

This year’s funding focus is to inspire, mentor, and enable youth to reach their full potential through culinary, nutrition and arts.

[More Info Here](#)



Join us for a 5-mile walk on April 24th to a water stop at JoJo’s Coffee and Goodness (4652 E Hwy. 20 #102, Niceville, FL 32578)— with the opportunity to stop or continue walking our full 10-mile route to Choctaw Beach Park, 12481 FL-20 W, Freeport, FL 32439) - every step counts in the fight to prevent child sexual abuse and help survivors heal.

Registration starts at 8am!

[More Info Here](#)



Join us April 26th at the Annual Destin Charity Wine Auction presented by the Jumonville Family.

The Wine Auction benefits children in need in Northwest Florida. The weekend kicks off with Patron Dinners hosted in private homes and restaurants along the Emerald Coast. Each of the dinners supports one of the benefiting charities.

[More Info Here](#)

Strike Out Abuse Bowl-A-Thon

We were so excited to be invited to the 2025 bowl-a-thon to Strike Out Abuse! The [Emerald Coast Exchange Club's](#) annual fundraiser to support community efforts, including the prevention of child abuse, youth programs, and community service was held on February 22nd and ECCAC was happy be in attendance!



What's Better Than 1 Therapy Dog? 2, Of Course!

We are so excited to have [Lane Redding](#) join our therapy dog crew with [Texas! Sharon](#) and our beloved [Hattie](#) showed them around on March 27th, and we couldn't be more thrilled to have them with us. The therapy dogs (and their owners) bring so much joy to the center and make a significant impact on not only the kids, but also the ECCAC staff. We are incredibly grateful for our partnership with [Dog-Harmony!](#)



Who's New to the Crew?

We are so excited to introduce new team members! Thank you for joining our family!

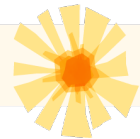
Empowering.



Restoring.



Preventing.



Prevention Team:

Julee Cox
Kenzie Corbin
Liza Harvin

Development Team:

Madison Lewis
Kate McDougall-Mason

Admin Team:

Emily Greer
Mariah Bridgewater
Kim Vores

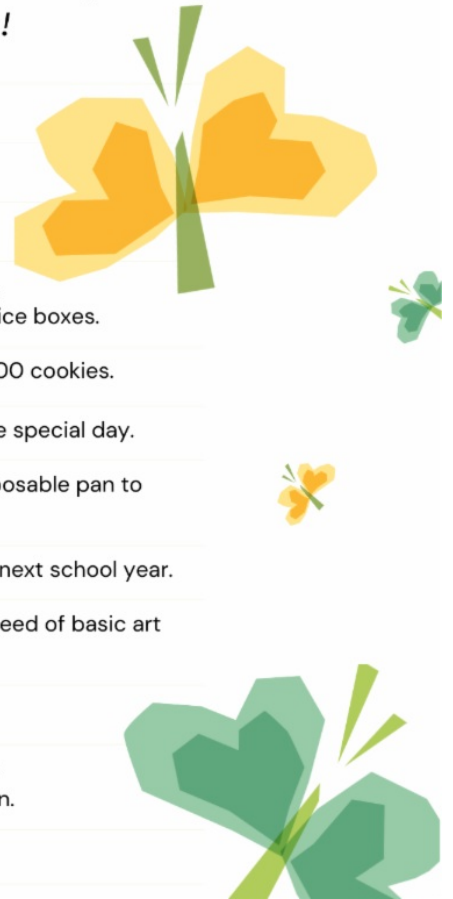
Interested In Hosting A Drive?

Serving the community



*Looking for a way to get involved? Host a drive for ECCAC with your organization!
We would love to partner with you!*

Gift Cards	For various retailers for clothes, makeup and basic needs.
Gas Cards	\$10 and \$15 gas cards for local gas stations.
Diapers & Wipes	Always a need, especially newborn and larger sized diapers and pull ups.
Snacks	Snacks for the kids are a staple in the centers. We supply chips, crackers, fruit snacks (all individually packaged), water bottles, soda in cans, and juice boxes.
Cookie Dough	Fresh cookies are baked daily in our centers. Last year we baked over 3300 cookies.
Party Decor	At the center we celebrate successes! Decor always helps to brighten the special day.
Birthday Boxes	Birthday boxes include party decor, candles, cake mix, frosting and a disposable pan to bake the cake.
Back to School	During the summer we run a back to school drive to collect items for the next school year.
Arts & Crafts	Therapists use art and craft supplies to aid in therapy. We are always in need of basic art supplies or easy crafting kits.
Stuffed Animals	New stuffed animals are handed out every day to the kids.
Clothing	Clothes are often taken for forensics analysis, so comfortable clothes are provided to the kids in our office. Clothing sizes and needs vary by season.
Toiletries	All sorts of personal care items are needed from babies to teens.

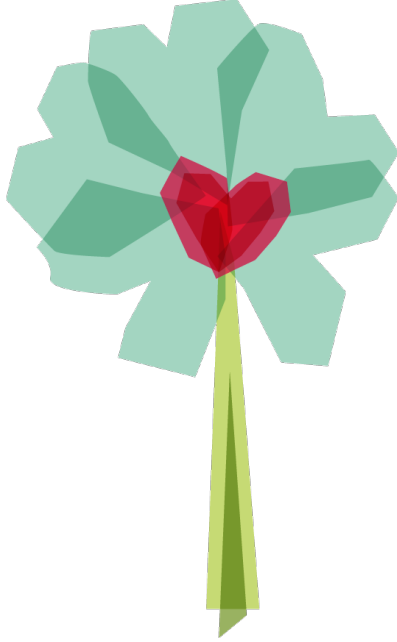


Please reach out to our Community Engagement Manager, [Kate McDougall-Mason](#) with any questions at kate@eccac.org.

ANNUAL & MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP

When you partner with us as a member, it is important for you to know that our team is celebrating because you are playing a huge role in a child's healing journey. It is a **BIG DEAL!**

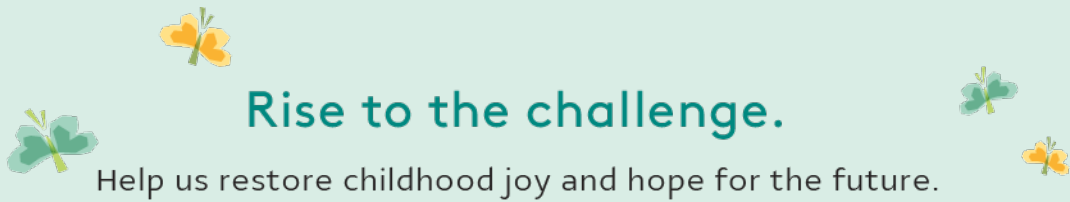
Thank you for your partnership as we work together in our



fight to [END CHILD ABUSE](#) and [END CHILD NEGLECT](#)!

Please note that all memberships are renewed on an annual or monthly basis. You can cancel your membership at any time by contacting us at info@eccac.org.

[Join Today!](#)

 **Rise to the challenge.**
Help us restore childhood joy and hope for the future.



[Become a Champion](#)

Emerald Coast Children's Advocacy Center | 401 McEwen Drive | Niceville, FL 32578 US

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