STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Arkansas House Newsletter

April 15, 2022

Preventing Child Abuse in Arkansas



The month of April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. It is a time to raise awareness and inspire collective action so that every child can lead their best life.

In the 2021 Regular Session, the General Assembly passed Act 920 which created the Blue Ribbon Task Force to End Child Abuse. Child Abuse Hotline operators in Arkansas receive thousands of calls every year. In 2020, more than 5,500 cases were investigated by authorities.

The task force is charged with reviewing child abuse data in the state and the state's options for adopting or revising policies, procedures, programs, and services to assist in identifying and eliminating child abuse. The task force will file a final report with the House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth.

The General Assembly also passed Act 975 which directs the Children Advocacy Centers of Arkansas to review and track reporting from the Department of Human Services relating to the alleged abuse or neglect of a child in order to ensure a consistent and comprehensive approach to providing services to a child and the

family of a child who is the victim of alleged abuse or neglect.

In addition, the General Assembly passed Act 556 which makes all full-time and part-time employees of public and private schools mandated reporters of child abuse.

We all can help to prevent abuse by supporting families in our communities. Parents who have support from family, friends, and neighbors are more likely to provide safe and healthy homes for their children.

You can also help prevent further abuse by reporting suspected maltreatment. If you see something that concerns you or just doesn’t look right, we encourage you to say something!

If you need to report child maltreatment, it’s easy. Just call the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-482-5964.