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Prevent Child Abuse America Announces Eleven Newly Re-chartered Chapters, Extending its Nationwide Reach and Impact through Partnerships

CHICAGO – [Prevent Child Abuse America](#) (PCA America) announced today that its chapters in eleven states—Arizona, California, Georgia, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Nevada, North Dakota, Tennessee, Washington, Wyoming—successfully completed the organization’s strengths-based chartering process in 2021, helping to extend the organization’s [mission](#) throughout the United States.

“Prevention happens in partnership, and our robust nationwide chapter network resides at the core of the work we do to ensure that all children and families thrive,” explained PCA America President & CEO Dr. Melissa Merrick. “We’re fortunate to have skilled and dedicated leadership and staff in all of these states, and the numerous local partners they collaborate with, which enables us to both extend our primary prevention efforts broadly and tailor them to meet the specific needs of diverse communities across the country.”

During this process, formally called Building Capacity Chartering, PCA America chapters undergo an in-depth self-assessment, combined with on-site interviews and discussions with board members, partners, funders, legislators and others, to evaluate criteria such as the demonstration of a strong mission and consistent brand identity, documentation of sound operational infrastructure and financial resources and evidence of leadership in the statewide scope of influence and activity in child abuse and neglect prevention.

“The comprehensive but focused chartering criteria framework ensures consistency across the network, define the chapter’s areas of expertise and capacity to focus on, all while addressing the needs of its core audiences,” stated PCA America Chief Operations Officer for State Chapters Anita Odom. “Affiliation with PCA America provides access to a broad network of aligned institutions, which not only helps to amplify the impact of the work but also engenders the sharing of information and expertise so together, we can provide the safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments that help children, families and communities succeed.”

PCA America chapters range from independent nonprofit organizations to entities operating under umbrella institutions such as government agencies, hospitals and universities. For example, the Arizona chapter is registered as a stand-alone 501(c)(3), while the California chapter operates under the umbrella of The Child Abuse Prevention Center (CAP Center), a statewide non-profit organization. Regardless of their makeup, chapter programs are frequently developed and delivered in tandem with a variety of public and private institutions.

[PCA Arizona:](#)

PCA Arizona is a stand-alone 501(c)(3) organization that leads or participates in many statewide coalitions and workgroups, including Collective Impact for Child Safety and Wellbeing, the Arizona Adverse Childhood Experiences Consortium, and Thriving Families Safer Children. It has strong partnerships with public entities such as the Department of Child Safety (DCS) and the Governor’s Office of Youth, Faith and Family. Additionally, PCA Arizona maintains strong relationships with the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention and Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program leads in the state.

PCA California – The Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Center:

The California chapter presence stretches across the state, offering 30 prevention programs and a network of approximately 500 Family Resource Centers under the California Family Resource Center Association. The agency is seen as the leader in prevention and works closely with a number of public and private entities, including being tasked by Governor Newsom to distribute \$3 million in emergency funding to children and family resource centers in response to COVID-19 in 2020, and then \$13 million 2021.

PCA Georgia – Mark Chaffin Center for Healthy Development at Georgia State University’s School of Public Health:

PCA Georgia is under the umbrella of Georgia State University’s Mark Chaffin Center for Healthy Development in Atlanta and works to strengthen families and inspire action through education, awareness, and advocacy. In partnership with Division of Family and Children Services, PCA Georgia is one of the leaders for Georgia’s Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan (CANPP). Additionally, PCA Georgia is one of the three backbone leaders who are implementing the CDC’s Essentials for Childhood framework their partners include the Department of Public Health and the Division of Family and Children Services. The chapter has a formal council structure with 29 current and active local PCA councils, which has been instrumental in moving Georgia to a child and family well-being network. The chapter also participates in several coalitions and task forces, including the Georgia Human Trafficking Task Force, Child Fatality Review, Child Abuse and Treatment Act Panel, and is the state’s home for Strengthening Families and Parent Cafes with support from DFCS and statewide partners.

PCA Kansas – Kansas Children’s Service League:

PCA America’s first chapter, PCA Kansas is under the Kansas Children’s Service League (KCSL) umbrella, an almost 130-year-old non-profit organization. The chapter has a statewide presence of a variety of prevention efforts including the Essentials for Childhood and the Kansas Power of Positive coalition, Thriving Families Safer Children, 1-800-CHILDREN, bullying prevention, and offers trainings on a variety of prevention topics. The agency serves as the central administrative office for 12 Healthy Families America sites in 30 counties and also implements Head Start. The chapter is recognized as the leader, collaborator, convener, coordinator and initiator of child abuse prevention.

PCA Maine – Maine Children’s Trust:

PCA Maine is under the umbrella of the Maine Children’s Trust, a statewide non-profit that was established in statute. Recognized as the state’s leader, collaborator and coordinator of child abuse and neglect prevention efforts, the Trust also serves as the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) lead and works closely with Maine’s Office of Child and Family Services. The agency maintains a statewide presence through the long-established Prevention Council structure where each council provides direct services, supports, and trainings in the local communities. Annual needs assessments are conducted by the councils based on child maltreatment data and surveys, identifying gaps in services and communities in need that inform the county level prevention plans and activities.

PCA Maryland – The Family Tree:

PCA Maryland operates under the umbrella of The Family Tree, a statewide non-profit organization with a highly committed 38-member board of directors. The Family Tree has solid relationships with Maryland’s Departments of Education, Health, Human Services, Maryland Family Network, the State Council Child Abuse & Neglect, advocacy organizations, non-profits and philanthropies. Its leadership and staff are currently leading or participating in eleven coalitions/task forces related to prevention of childhood adversities and promoting

high quality early care and education. The agency is the co- backbone organization for Maryland's Essential for Childhood prevention strategies.

[PCA Nevada – Nevada Institute for Children’s Research & Policy at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas’ School of Public Health:](#)

PCA Nevada is under the umbrella of the Nevada Institute for Children’s Research and Policy within the School of Public Health at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The chapter has a committed advisory board and effectively partners with key public entities like the Department of Children and Family Services. The chapter leads the Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Task Force, participates in many coalitions like Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council, Maternal Child Health Coalition, Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition.

[PCA North Dakota:](#)

PCA North Dakota is a stand-alone 501(c)(3) organization with a ten-member board of directors. The chapter has a variety of prevention efforts across the state and serves as the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program lead. A co-leader of the Children's Justice Alliance and the Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Task Force, PCA North Dakota currently has a five-year CDC contract for a project called Healthy Outcomes focused on indigenous communities. The chapter is also engaged in a variety of state prevention plans focused on early childhood and is also engaged in combating Human Trafficking with partners.

[PCA Tennessee – Nurture the Next:](#)

The PCA Tennessee chapter has experienced tremendous growth after receiving additional funding to expand evidence-based home visiting throughout the state. In 2020, the organization rebranded to be called Nurture the Next. The agency is recognized as a leader, collaborator, coordinator and initiator of child abuse and neglect prevention in Tennessee and provides a variety of opportunities for residents to be involved through the Nurture the Next mentorship program.

[PCA Washington – Washington State Dept. of Child, Youth & Families:](#)

PCA Washington is within state government, under the umbrella of the Department of Children, Youth & Families | Strengthening Families Washington Office (SFWA), and the work is guided and supported by two large councils: the Early Learning Advisory Council and the Parent Advisory Group. The agency has been engaged in the Essentials for Childhood work as a key partner and the agency plays an active role on several coalitions, such as the Behavioral Health Advisory Council, Start Early WA (HV Implementation and Quality Supports), Community Café Collaborative, AHT Task Force, and more. PCA Washington values the voice of lived expertise and engages parent leaders in every aspect of the work, from grant reviews to training and education and with sensitivity to racial and cultural differences.

[PCA Wyoming – Wyoming Children’s Trust:](#)

Operating under the Wyoming Children’s Trust Fund, a quasi-governmental agency, 2021 represented PCA Wyoming’s first chartering. The chapter has a statewide presence of a variety of prevention efforts including home visiting, CSA Prevention, AHT prevention, Fatherhood Initiative, Parent Cafes and authentic engagement of parents and caregivers. The chapter collaborates with key public entities and state departments that serve children and families, and serves on a number of task forces such as: Human Trafficking and Governor's Task Force; involved in the Children's Justice Project, is on the leadership team of the WYHomeMatters campaign and partners with the Early Learning community, courts and children's advocacy centers.

To learn more about these chapters, please click on the links above or visit the [PCA America website](#).

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About Prevent Child Abuse America

Commemorating its 50th year in 2022, Prevent Child Abuse America is a national organization with chapters in 48 states and nearly 600 Healthy Families America home visitation sites throughout the country. It promotes services that improve child well-being and develops programs that help to prevent all types of abuse and neglect. Ninety-four cents of every dollar spent goes directly into programs and services, which is why it is rated as one of the top charities for children by *Consumer Reports* and charity oversight organizations, including Charity Navigator, GreatNonprofits and GuideStar. Visit preventchildabuse.org to learn more.