



Charlie Crist  
Governor

Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.  
State Surgeon General

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Contact: DOH Communications Office  
(850) 245-4111

**THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
**AND DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES RECOGNIZE NOVEMBER 19**  
**AS WORLD DAY FOR PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE**

**TALLAHASSEE** – The Florida Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Children and Families (DCF) join the Women’s World Summit Foundation (WWSF) and International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) in recognizing November 19 as World Day for the Prevention of Child Abuse. This day seeks to create a worldwide commitment to child abuse prevention and develop partnerships between child protection organizations to promote awareness and action of child maltreatment issues.

“The love and care we show today for vulnerable children will have an effect on generations to come,” Children and Families Secretary Bob Butterworth said. “We must work with our partners in child protection and children’s health to ensure the pleas of children in need are heard and their futures are free from the trauma of abuse and neglect.”

According to the WWSF website, approximately 40 million children suffer from abuse and neglect worldwide and one in four girls will be sexually assaulted before age 18. In Florida, there were 237,290 alleged victims of abuse in FY2005-2006 and 94 deaths as a result of abuse or neglect in the calendar year of 2005 (source: DCF QuickFacts September 2007 and Child Abuse Death Review Team Report 2006).

"In the healthcare field, we have long understood and advocated the importance of making healthy choices to prevent physical illness and disease," Children’s Medical Services Division Director Michael L. Haney Ph.D., NCC, LMHC said. “Now, with new research connecting heart disease and cancer to adverse childhood experiences, we must begin to view the prevention of child abuse and neglect as an avenue to improved adult health.”

The Department of Health recognizes that members of the medical and health fields have an important role to play in the identification and prevention of child abuse. Physicians and other healthcare service providers are in a position to notice and report even the smallest physical or mental changes in a child. This vigilance leads to earlier detection and reporting of potential abuse cases.



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**In addition to the health care community, here are some tips all Floridians can practice to prevent child abuse:**

- Be a loving parent
- Create a healthy community environment for children
- Offer help and support to families
- Take a time-out when you get angry, frustrated or overwhelmed

DOH promotes, protects, and improves the health of all people in Florida. Within DOH's Children's Medical Services, numerous programs focus on protecting children and preventing child maltreatment, including the Child Protection Teams and Sexual Abuse Treatment Program. For more information, please visit [www.floridashealth.com](http://www.floridashealth.com) or <http://www.cms-kids.com/>. To learn more about programs and services offered by the Florida Department of Children and Families, visit [http://www.state.fl.us/cf\\_web](http://www.state.fl.us/cf_web).

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