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Date: 4/8/2014 5:32:49 PM
Subject: Policy Post for April 8, 2014

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April 8, 2014

Children's Trust Marks 30 Years and Launches Child Abuse Prevention Month

Children's Trust of South Carolina hosted a State House news conference last Thursday, April 3, to commemorate 30 years of preventing child abuse and neglect in our state and to launch Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Gov. Nikki Haley joined Children's Trust, recognizing the anniversary and child abuse prevention month with proclamations. "We're here today to make sure we protect the children that can't always speak for themselves," said Governor Nikki Haley. "One of the most important things we can do is to improve the lives of those who don't feel like their voices are loud enough, or don't know how to say that they need help. The responsibility falls on all of us to raise the awareness of child abuse and do everything in our power to prevent it."

Children's Trust thanked Sen. Thomas Alexander and Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter for introducing Children's Trust proclamations. Children's Trust also thanked the legislators who signed the pledge to work to keep South Carolina's children healthy, nurtured and safe.

Left to right: Rep. Rita Allison, Rep. Raye Felder, Rep. Shannon Erickson, Rep. Bakari Sellers, Rep. Beth Bernstein, Rep. Mia McLeod, CEO Sue Williams, Gov. Nikki Haley, Rep. Laurie Funderburk, Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter, Rep. James L. Smith, Jr., Rep. Patsy Knight, Rep. Russell Ott, Rep. Jenny Horne, Rep. Mandy Powers Norrell. Not pictured: Rep. David Weeks, Sen. Thomas Alexander

Pinwheel Cities Grow in Greenville and Charleston

Throughout Greenville County, more than 35,000 pinwheels have been distributed to plant in support of Child Abuse Prevention Month. Led by Greenville's First Steps, the effort has made Greenville South Carolina's first Pinwheel City. This is the third annual effort by community leaders in the Upstate.

Greenville leaders also hosted Celebration Sunday, on Sunday, March 30. Children's Trust Board Member Ramon Nieves-Lugo was part of the opening ceremony.

In Charleston, Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr, representatives of the Dee Norton Lowcountry Children's Center and Children's Trust will plant a Pinwheels for Prevention Garden at the intersection of Rutledge and Broad. The event, originally scheduled for today, was postponed due to weather.

Children's Trust thanks these partners for their support to raise awareness for child abuse prevention. The pinwheel signifies the happy, healthy carefree childhoods each child deserves. Pinwheels for Prevention is a national initiative of Prevent Child Abuse America.

[Pinwheel garden packages available.](#) Join others throughout South Carolina and show your support for ending child abuse.

CEO Sue Williams Advocates for Home Visiting

Sue Williams, chief executive officer of Children's Trust, penned a published letter to the editor in The State newspaper on March 31. The letter pointed to the importance of home visiting and family-strengthening work in South Carolina.

The letter encouraged citizens to support the reauthorization of the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting funds. Home visiting is an early intervention strategy that helps break generational cycles of abuse and creates a better future for South Carolina's children.

[The full text of the letter is available.](#)

Legislation introduced to improve child abuse and neglect reporting

[S. 1163](#), introduced by Sen. Tom Young, R-Aiken, targets improving child abuse and neglect reporting. The proposed legislation would allow the Department of Social Services to release additional public details about suspected child abuse and neglect cases. The hope is that greater transparency will help the public and the legislature better understand and improve child protective services. The legislation would also require coroners to report suspicious deaths of children, which would provide more accurate data collection across every county.

This legislation is expected to be the first in a series of bills aimed at improving the child protective services system.

The full Senate Judiciary Committee was expected to consider this bill and others at 3 p.m., Tuesday, April 8.

Bill considered for age-appropriate sexual abuse awareness and education for students

House Education K-12 Subcommittee will meet on Tuesday, one and half hours after adjournment, to discuss [H. 4061](#). This legislation would create age appropriate sexual abuse awareness and prevention education for students 4k-12th grade.

For your calendar

3 p.m., April 8. Senate Finance Committee will begin work on the [FY 2014-2015 budget](#).

8:30 a.m., April 9. House Education and Public Works Committee meets to discuss legislative aimed at updated child care licensing requirements.

10 a.m., April 9. Senate Education meets to discuss several pieces of legislation, including [H. 3428 First Steps to School Readiness](#).

The House will begin a two week furlough on April 14. The Senate will furlough for one week, beginning April 21.

First-time Index Shows Children of Color at Heightened Disadvantage in South Carolina

"Race for Results" Report Identifies Need to Create More Opportunity for Success for All Children

In the first-time index and new KIDS COUNT® policy report, Race for Results: Building a Path to Opportunity for All Children, South Carolina trails national levels. This new compilation shows South Carolina below national figures for its three largest racial and ethnic groups on how children are progressing on key milestones.

Copies of the report will be delivered to Senators and Representative this week. [Additional copies are available at Children's Trust and on our website.](#) Please contact mbranham@scchildren.org to reserve a copy.

The index is based on 12 indicators that measure a child's success for each stage of life, from birth to adulthood. Indicators measure education, poverty, family and health.

Emma's Law Continues to Progress

[S. 137](#), known as Emma's Law, would require ignition interlocks for first offense DUI with blood alcohol level of 0.15 or higher with additional penalties for repeat offenses. The bill returned to the Senate last week with amendments.

In a [recent report released by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#), South Carolina's rate of heavy alcohol use among persons aged 21 or older was higher (8.9%) than the national rate (6.9%) in 2008-2012. The report, Behavioral Health Barometer South Carolina 2013, also provides additional S.C.

specific data on youth and adult mental health topics, including depression, suicide and illicit drug use.

Taxpayers Reminded to Check-Off for Children

Taxpayers are reminded to make a donation to Children's Trust through their South Carolina individual income tax returns using form I-330. Current and past leadership volunteers have agreed to match citizen donations to Children's Trust made through state income tax Check-Off program. Volunteer leadership will match up to \$30,000 as those funds become available through the match effort.

Child Welfare News from Around the Country

Pennsylvania bill could force disclosure for school employees

If a Pennsylvania bill becomes law, potential school employees would have to disclose on a state form any reports of sexual misconduct in their employment histories.

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Policy Post is published by Children's Trust of South Carolina.

We invite you to join with us to strengthen and support public and private prevention efforts that keep South Carolina's children safe.

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