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Supporting families during the COVID-19 pandemic

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

[This year's National Child Abuse Prevention Month comes when families across the world are being significantly impacted by the novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\).](#)

Focusing on child safety and well-being is now more important than ever. In order to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, schools in Oregon are closed and strict physical distancing guidelines are in place. While we recognize and support these efforts to protect community health, it is concerning for the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team (MDT Child Abuse Team) because we know that schools are a sanctuary for children; they are places where children are safe and protected – where mandatory reporters such as teachers, nurses and counselors see children every day and can report any suspected child abuse and neglect.

The Oregon Department of Human Services' Child Abuse Hotline is an essential statewide service and remains open 24/7. Oregon DHS, in partnership with the District Attorney's MDT Child Abuse Team, remains committed to responding to reports of abuse or neglect to investigate and support child victims and their families. We are thankful that Oregon DHS child protection workers continue to meet with families in order to make and keep children safe.

Supporting families during the COVID-19 pandemic is a priority of the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office and its Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team.

[To that end, the District Attorney's MDT Child Abuse Team has released several short videos that community members can view and share.](#)

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office recognizes all of its community-based and system-based partners for their support.

If you believe a child is being harmed, please contact law enforcement or the Oregon Child Abuse Hotline at 1-855-503-SAFE (7233).

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The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team includes representatives from CARES Northwest, local law enforcement, public schools, hospitals, health departments, local mental health service providers, the Oregon Department of Human Services, and Multnomah County's Department of Community Justice.

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team works with community partners to protect children who have been abused and neglected while ensuring that all practices are trauma-informed and mitigate the lifelong consequences of child abuse. The team also handles all child homicides, felony child physical abuse cases, felony child abandonment cases, custodial interference cases, and felony sex crimes where the victim is currently under the age of 18 and where the suspect is determined not to be a stranger to the child.

CARES Northwest, Multnomah County's child abuse assessment center, is a community-based medical program for the assessment, treatment and prevention of child abuse. The organization is one of the largest child abuse assessment centers in the nation and serves more than 5,000 children annually.



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