



OKLAHOMA
State Department
of Health



Planting Positive Roots

NATIONAL
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION
MONTH 2026

A Toolkit for Oklahomans in Partnership for
Safe, Healthy, and Happy Children and Families

#OKCAP2026 #PlantingPositiveRoots

Table of Contents

Roadmap	1
Introduction	2
About National Child Abuse Prevention Month	2
About the Oklahoma CAP Month Toolkit	2
Your Support Makes a Difference!	3
Get Started Now – Start Planning for NCAPM2026 in Your Community or Organization	4
April Activities & Events	6
Pinwheel Garden	9
Blue Ribbons and Blue Ribbon Trees	10
Light Oklahoma Blue	10
Legislative Visits	11
Host an Open House	11
Virtual Backgrounds, Social Media Graphics and Other Resources	12
My Happiest Day Coloring Challenge	12
Digital Media Tools	13
Social Media Posts	13
Digital Media Graphics and Tools	15
Media Outreach	16
Resources	16
Proclamations	16
Op-Ed	17
Press Release	17

Family Support Month

2026 ROADMAP



2026 Oklahoma Child Abuse and Neglect Conference

March 30 - April 1

This conference offers professionals working in the field of child maltreatment the latest research and best practices to enhance their responses and provide appropriate services to children and their caregivers affected by child maltreatment.



Scan here for **My Happiest Day Coloring Challenge Registration.**



Strengthening Families Together Collaborative Convening

March 30

Provides opportunities to co-design pathways and remove systemic barriers to more adequately address the need and ensure a comprehensive continuum of culturally relevant, community-based supports and services for children and families.



Scan here for the **Proclamation Template.**



Scan here for **Blue Ribbon Tree, Pinwheel Garden, and other Blue Activities Registration.**



CAP Kick-Off Day

April 1

Take a stand for prevention and help kick off National Child Abuse Prevention and Family Support Month in Oklahoma in a big way by hosting or participating in an activity or event on or around Wednesday, April 1st. Join the initiative to create stronger, safer communities for children and families across Oklahoma!



Share photos and stories from **NCAPM Kick-Off Day Events Here!**



Oklahoma Wears Blue Day #OKWearsBlue

April 8

People all over Oklahoma are encouraged to wear blue, take a group photo or selfie, and share it on social media using the hashtags **#OKWearsBlue** and **#OKCAP2026**.



Outstanding Child Abuse Prevention Awards 2026

April 24

Join us in honoring outstanding individuals, organizations, and projects that foster safe, stable, and nurturing environments and relationships for Oklahoma's children and families.



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Email LaChez' English at LachezE@health.ok.gov for more information.

Introduction

About National Child Abuse Prevention Month

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month (NCAPM), dedicated to raising awareness and promoting actions to prevent child abuse. This month, we recognize the importance of families and communities collaborating to support the well-being of children. The Oklahoma Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) program encourages all Oklahomans to show their support for children and families in meaningful ways, not just in April but throughout the year. In 2026, our focus will be on planting positive roots to help Oklahoma families thrive and build resilience, ensuring that children in Oklahoma can experience healthy, happy, and safe childhoods.

About the Oklahoma CAP Month Toolkit

The Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) and the Oklahoma CBCAP program are excited to present the 2026 Oklahoma Child Abuse Prevention Month toolkit. This toolkit is designed to help you organize your local campaign for National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April.

Inside the toolkit, you will find:

- A suggested timeline for campaign activities
- Key facts and statistics for your messaging
- Sample social media posts for easy sharing

For more information about this year's theme and to access year-round support resources, please visit the [Oklahoma Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness website](#). If you need additional technical assistance with the toolkit, feel free to reach out to LaChéz' English, the Oklahoma CBCAP Grant Coordinator, at LachezE@health.ok.gov.



Your Support Makes a Difference!

While partners of the Oklahoma CBCAP program work on this year-round, it is especially important in April to prioritize the safety and well-being of children and families in Oklahoma. Every year during NCAPM, we recognize the importance of communities coming together to raise awareness about preventing child abuse and neglect.

There are numerous ways to share messages about NCAPM. Whether you choose to communicate through an email newsletter, social media, your organization's website, text alerts, or local news stations, each time you inform your community about how they can contribute to strengthening families, you are making a meaningful impact.

This year, during NCAPM in Oklahoma, we will focus on the theme of **"Planting Positive Roots."** By cultivating the seeds of change and fostering community, we can create strong foundations for families throughout the state. This theme encourages us to intentionally explore, engage, and nurture these roots, allowing families to grow and thrive. We envision children living in communities and homes that are anchored in resilience and support.

Every action you take to raise awareness can make a difference, so act now!

Stay connected with the OSDH on [Facebook](#), [X](#) (formerly Twitter), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#)! We invite you to like, share, and join the NCAPM conversation. Use the hashtags [#OKCAP2026](#), [#OKWearsBlue](#), [#PlantingPositiveRoots](#), and [#PictureABrighterFuture](#) to tag us—let's plant positive roots to create a brighter future together!



Get Started Now – Start Planning for NCAPM2026 in Your Community or Organization

There are numerous creative ways to plan activities for the month of April. Here are a few suggested ideas to help you get started. You can use any of these recommendations or come up with your own. Regardless of your choice, this toolkit provides many tools and resources to assist you throughout the month.

March – Take the month of March to familiarize yourself with the Oklahoma Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness website. If you are not already, sign up for the CAP Action email list to stay up to date with future planning and information.

April 1st – Today is the first day of NCAPM and marks the official CAP Month Kick-Off Day in Oklahoma. Let us know your plans for the state-wide kick-off day by clicking here. Use messaging and images from this toolkit to post to social media to announce the first day of NCAPM. Don't forget to use **#OKCAP2026** and **#PlantingPositiveRoots** to join the conversation and tag the OSDH on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, and Instagram!

Fridays in April are for #PlantingPositiveRoots: Schedule social media posts every Friday in April to highlight simple actions that caregivers and families can take to strengthen protective factors. Use the hashtags **#PlantingPositiveRoots** and **#OKCAP2026**, along with the Child Welfare Information Gateway Protective Factors Conversation Guides for the messaging and GIFs in your posts.

First Week of April: Mark your calendar for the Annual Oklahoma Child Abuse and Neglect Conference and the Annual CAP Awards Ceremony. Next, host your own meeting. No matter what the event, make sure to highlight the activities and events that will occur throughout the month.



Second Week of April: Support the 2026 Oklahoma NCAPM campaign by adding the email signature block to your emails and downloading the digital background to use for all virtual meetings. Plan to include your entire organization or family and share on social media.

Third Week of April: Organize a proclamation signing with a local official. Invite the press to attend the signing or prepare a press release to share with local media, emphasizing the importance of the proclamation. This toolkit includes templates for both the proclamation and the press release.

Fourth Week of April: Partner with other organizations to develop a resource fair for families in your community or organize a drive to collect concrete supports (diapers, wipes, hygiene items, household cleaning/laundry supplies, etc.) for your own organization or to go to multiple organizations.

May: Begin to identify one to two actionable plans to carry out each month of the year so that the conversations, activities, and events around Child Abuse Prevention do not end in April. Check the [Oklahoma Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness website](#) frequently and sign up for the [CAP Action email list](#) to stay up to date with information throughout the year.

April Activities & Events

Individuals, families, neighborhoods, organizations, and communities are encouraged to plan activities throughout April in recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month. We invite you to participate in all the activities organized by CBCAP, as well as any initiatives you wish to organize on your own.

We will be tracking all activities leading up to and during April and would love to include any of your plans. Once you have an activity planned, or even after it has been completed, please take a few minutes to fill out the [2026 NCAPM Activities and Events Form](#).

We also request that you take photos of your activities and upload them using the same form. The form can be submitted multiple times, so feel free to return at the end of the month to share any additional photos with us!

April 1 - NCAPM Statewide Kick-Off Day

Mark your calendars for April 1, 2026, as we celebrate the start of National Child Abuse Prevention Month with a state-wide event in Oklahoma. The Oklahoma CBCAP encourages everyone to organize an activity or event on this day and share their plans with us by [clicking here](#).

April 8 - Oklahoma Wears Blue Day

Every Oklahoman is encouraged to participate in the national Wear Blue Day, which falls on Wednesday, April 8, 2026. Post a selfie on this day wearing blue to increase awareness of Child Abuse Prevention. Challenge co-workers, friends, and family to get creative and see who comes up with the best picture while wearing blue. Share the pictures on social media with the hashtags [#OKWearsBlue](#), [#OKCAP2026](#), and [#PlantingPositiveRoots](#). Please send us your photos and register your Wear Blue Day by using the [2026 NCAPM Registration Link](#).



March 30 - April 1 Annual Oklahoma CCAN Conference

Each year, the Oklahoma Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) collaborates with the University of Oklahoma's Center on Child Abuse and Neglect to co-sponsor the Oklahoma Child Abuse and Neglect Conference. This conference is designed for multidisciplinary professionals working in the field of child abuse and neglect. Attendees learn best practices within their specific disciplines to better provide services to children and caregivers affected by maltreatment, aiming to reduce trauma for both the children and their caregivers.

In 2026, CBCAP is committed to offering a comprehensive prevention track that covers a wide array of topics crucial to child and family well-being. The agenda will feature training on the core principles and application of motivational interviewing for goal setting, an overview of child sexual abuse prevention programming, and a look into child health issues such as physical activity, obesity, and the outcomes of one project completed with families enrolled in Parents as Teachers. The track also includes dedicated sessions on effective parenting education and school health programs across the state. In addition to these general sessions, the conference will provide specialized institutes, including targeted professional development for Children First nurses and Parents as Teachers parent educators, as well as the opportunity for attendees to complete the nationally recognized Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support National Certification training, which is open to all participants.



March 30 – Strengthening Families Collaborative Bi-Annual Convening

The Strengthening Families Collaborative hosts meetings twice a year to engage stakeholders from diverse backgrounds in discussions about redesigning service delivery systems. Through this collective effort, the organizers aim to streamline services, enhance coordination among agencies, and address systemic barriers that impede the provision of comprehensive support to communities throughout the state.

Join us on March 30, 2026, immediately after the CCAN Conference Institutes at the Embassy Suites in Norman. More information and registration details will be provided soon. Please sign up to receive this information through our Collaborative email list by [clicking here](#).

April 24 – Annual CAP Awards Ceremony

Each year, during the month of April, we recognize outstanding efforts of organizations, individuals, or groups that promote safe, stable, and nurturing environments and relationships for Oklahoma’s children and families.

Please join us on April 24, 2026, from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. in room 100 of the Oklahoma State Capitol.



May 1 – CAP Action Committee Meeting: 2026 NCAPM Reflection

The Oklahoma CAP Action Committee offers an accessible way to get involved in Child Abuse Prevention. The committee's mission is to unite state and community partners, providing them with information, resources, and tools that prioritize the well-being of children, youth, and families. This is achieved by supporting the NCAPM and primary prevention efforts throughout the year. Below are links to subscribe to our email list and to register for upcoming meetings.

[CAP Action Committee Email Subscription](#)

[CAP Action Committee 2026 Meeting Registration](#)

We invite you to join the wrap-up meeting in May, where we will hear from partners, reflect on the planning, activities, and events of NCAPM 2026, and begin to discuss what is around the corner for NCAPM 2027! This will be our last meeting until the fall of 2026.

Pinwheel Garden

Pinwheels are the national symbol for child abuse prevention. They represent the opportunity for happy, healthy, and safe childhoods that every Oklahoma child deserves. During April, pinwheel gardens are displayed throughout Oklahoma, featuring anywhere from a few pinwheels to several hundred. Pinwheels can be purchased in any quantity and are available in bulk from various distributors. If you don't have space to create an outdoor pinwheel garden, consider making paper pinwheels to display indoors. [Click here](#) for a template to create a DIY pinwheel that is perfect for both kids and adults! Once you've planted your pinwheel garden, take a photo and share it on social media using the hashtags #OKCAP2026 and #PlantingPositiveRoots. Also, remember to register your pinwheel garden and upload your images using the [2026 NCAPM Registration Link](#).



Blue Ribbons and Blue Ribbon Trees

Since 1989, the blue ribbon has served as a powerful symbol reminding us of our collective responsibility to create a safe, stable, and nurturing environment for all children. This initiative began when a grandmother from Virginia tied a blue ribbon to her car in memory of her grandson, who was lost to child maltreatment. The Oklahoma CBCAP program encourages individuals, groups, and organizations to display blue ribbons or blue ribbon trees as a demonstration of support for every child in Oklahoma. This visual representation signifies the vital role we all play in our communities and organizations to protect, strengthen, and prevent child abuse and neglect among children. If you take part in using blue ribbons during the month of April, take a photo and share it on social media using the hashtags **#OKCAP2026** and **#PlantingPositiveRoots**. Also, remember to register your blue ribbon display or blue ribbon trees and upload your images using the [2026 NCAPM Registration Link](#).

Light Oklahoma Blue

Each April, various community bridges, fountains, monuments, downtown streets, and courthouses light up in blue to support NCAPM. The Oklahoma CBCAP program encourages everyone to participate in the Light Oklahoma Blue movement throughout April.

Get creative in showcasing the color blue in your community and neighborhoods. You can use blue filters to cover lights that do not change automatically. If lighting is not an option, consider collaborating with local businesses or individuals to display blue ribbons, balloons, bows, or NCAPM signage on doors and mailboxes.

When organizing blue displays across Oklahoma in April, remember to take photos and share them on social media using the hashtags **#OKCAP2026** and **#PlantingPositiveRoots**. Additionally, don't forget to register your Light Oklahoma Blue initiatives and upload your images using the [2026 NCAPM Registration Link](#).



Legislative Visits

The Oklahoma Legislature is in session throughout the month of April, making it an excellent opportunity to visit the state capitol and meet with your Senator and Representative. You can emphasize the importance of primary prevention measures for child abuse and neglect during your meeting. If visiting in person isn't possible, you can also reach out by calling, emailing, or writing a letter. You can find the contact information for all Oklahoma Senators and Representatives by [clicking here](#). If visiting in person is not an option, you could also call, email, or write a letter. Other resources for the Oklahoma Legislature are the websites for the [Oklahoma State Legislature](#) and the [Oklahoma House of Representatives](#). Let us know if you do reach out to your Senator or Representative and tell us how it went by using the [2026 NCAPM Registration Link](#).

Host an Open House

The Oklahoma CBCAP encourages all community-level programs to host an open house to showcase their organizations and initiatives. Invite community members, legislators, senators, your mayor, city council members, and other stakeholders to come and learn more about the work your organization does in addressing primary or secondary prevention.

An open house can be scaled to fit your needs, whether it's a small gathering or a larger event. For example, you could host a come-and-go open house after hours, a brown bag lunch and learn, or even a virtual open house.

If you decide to host an open house, please let us know how it went by using the [2026 NCAPM Registration Link](#). Don't forget to take photos of the event and upload them through the same form!



Virtual Backgrounds, Social Media Graphics and other Resources

This is one of the easiest ways to promote awareness for Child Abuse Prevention during the month of April! Use one of the graphics found within this toolkit to spread the message through your email signature, during Zoom or Teams meetings, and through your organization's social media channels.

My Happiest Day Coloring Challenge

The “My Happiest Day” coloring challenge is a creative and enjoyable way to engage children in reflecting on happy, healthy, and stable childhoods during NCAPM. To participate, use the [2026 NCAPM Registration Link](#) to download the coloring sheet, or any blank sheet of paper, and have children draw and color a picture that represents their happiest day, moment, or memory.

This challenge is open to children of all ages, as well as classrooms, after-school programs, families, and groups who can collaborate on a shared project.

Once the artwork is complete, simply take a photo of the finished design with a smartphone and share it on social media using the hashtags [#PictureABrighterFuture](#), [#OKCAP2026](#), and [#PlantingPositiveRoots](#). If you are unable to share on social media, you can submit your photo using the [2026 NCAPM Registration Link](#).



Digital Media Tools

Raising awareness about prevention and supporting families through your social media networks can make a significant difference in your community. Engage your followers, family, and friends by sharing the NCAPM campaign using the sample social media posts provided, along with the official hashtags **#OKCAP2026** and **#PlantingPositiveRoots**. Don't forget to tag the OSDH in your posts on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, and Instagram! Using the hashtags and tagging us in your posts help us to track the NCAPM conversations across the state.

Social Media Posts

NCAPM Announcement and General Campaign Posts

Today marks the beginning of National Child Abuse Prevention Month! It is up to all of us, every day, to help prevent child abuse. **#OKCAP2026**
#PlantingPositiveRoots

Whenever you help a caregiver be the best they can be, you are **#PlantingPositiveRoots**! Take a moment today to assist a first-time parent or caregiver or share a resource with a neighbor. **#OKCAP2026**

Equality matters! By ensuring that every family has equal opportunities and access to the necessary supports, we can enhance the safety and well-being of all Oklahoma children. **#OKCAP2026**
#PlantingPositiveRoots



OK Wears Blue Day Posts

Join us for **#OKWearsBlue** this Wednesday! Help raise awareness to support families and prevent abuse and neglect during National Child Abuse Prevention Month. **#OKCAP2026 #PlantingPositiveRoots**

We are wearing blue on April 8th to raise awareness for Child Abuse Prevention! Join us and post a photo of yourself using the hashtags **#OKWearsBlue #OKCAP2026 #PlantingPositiveRoots**

#OKWearsBlue shows support for **#OKCAP2026** as we raise awareness during National Child Abuse Prevention Month by supporting Oklahoma families. Every day, it is our responsibility to ensure children are safe, healthy, and happy. **#PlantingPositiveRoots**

Pinwheel Gardens, Blue Ribbon Trees, and More

Pinwheels symbolize the joy and happiness of childhood. Planting a pinwheel garden in April for National Child Abuse Prevention Month sparks conversation about supporting families and prevention efforts across Oklahoma. **#OKCAP2026 #PlantingPositiveRoots**

Wear blue for National Child Abuse Prevention month, snap a photo with a pinwheel garden or a blue ribbon tree, and post to social media using **#OKCAP2026 #OKWearsBlue #PlantingPositiveRoots**

In April, all Oklahomans are encouraged to decorate trees with blue ribbons as we work together with families and communities to strengthen relationships and prevent child abuse and neglect. **#OKCAP2026 #PlantingPositiveRoots**

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Decorate a tree in your community with blue ribbons to raise awareness for child abuse prevention in Oklahoma. Share your Blue Ribbon Tree on social media using **#OKCAP2026** and **#PlantingPositiveRoots**



Become a catalyst for change! Download the most recent Prevention Resource Guide and learn how to put protective factors into action in your community and with families. Make a real impact this **#ChildAbusePreventionMonth!** **#OKCAP2026** **#PlantingPositiveRoots**

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/resources/20232024-prevention-resource-guide/>

Digital Media Graphics and Tools

[Social Media Toolkit](#)

[Social Media Banner](#)

[NCAPM Virtual Meeting Background](#)

[NCAPM Power Point Presentation Template](#)



Media Outreach

Let's explore the power of collaboration with the media! By joining forces, we can amplify our message, reach a wider audience, and create impactful stories together. The following links will be helpful in finding local child abuse and neglect statistics to include in media outreach.

Resources

[Oklahoma Human Services 2024 Annual Report](#)

[Child Maltreatment 2022](#)

[Children's Bureau](#)

Proclamations

Each April, the President of the United States issues a proclamation to designate National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Many State Governors, including Oklahoma's Governor, also issue proclamations to raise public awareness about child abuse and neglect, reaffirm state resources dedicated to this cause, and promote community involvement through state activities.

At the local level, the OSDH and the Oklahoma CBCAP program encourage cities and communities throughout Oklahoma to request a proclamation from their mayors or other community leaders. There is a sample request letter and proclamation that can be used. Feel free to use what we have provided or edit the template to meet your own needs.

[Proclamation Request Template](#)

[Proclamation Template](#)



Op-Ed

Op-eds are a popular public relations tactic that allows for broad outreach to influencers and stakeholders. A pertinent example of an op-ed was written by Dr. Melissa Merrick and Dr. Norell Rosado in 2022 for the Chicago Times Tribune. The piece is titled “Childhood Deaths Are Preventable” and effectively highlights the connection between poverty and child abuse and neglect. This serves as a strong illustration of how op-eds can be utilized to raise awareness in your own community during NCAPM. The Op-Ed linked below can be used as is or as a template to write your own op-ed.

[Op-Ed Template](#)

Press Release

Press releases are essential tools for communicating newsworthy information about programs, organizations, and other groups to the media. They are used to raise awareness and attract media coverage on specific topics or events. Therefore, events such as the announcement of April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a proclamation signing, or Oklahoma Wears Blue Day provide excellent opportunities for writing a press release.

[Oklahoma Wears Blue Day Press Release](#)

