

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

PROCLAMATION NO. 07-047

Proclaiming April 2007 Child Abuse Prevention Month in Multnomah County, Oregon

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

- a. Child abuse is *increasing* in Multnomah County. Oregon's Department of Human Services estimates that from 2003 to 2005, the number of abused children rose from less than 1600 to over 2200 in Multnomah County, an increase of 28% in just two years.
- b. Child abuse is entirely preventable in an engaged and supportive community. With the efforts of each and every citizen in Multnomah County, the pain of abused children need not go unnoticed and unreported.
- c. Multnomah County is actively dedicated to protecting abused and neglected children, and to helping parents become responsible for their children's health and well-being.
 - i. The Multnomah County Commission on Children, Families and Community (CCFC) convenes the Child Youth and Family Network. The purpose of the Network is to promote comprehensive, collaborative, and coordinated prevention and intervention services and supports to improve the safety and well being of children. The CCFC helps to fund several child abuse prevention and intervention services, including Healthy Start, Family and Community Alliance, CASA, and two local relief nurseries.
 - ii. Under the auspices of the Multnomah County Health Department, the Family Services Unit provides and coordinates supervision, intervention and treatment for parents on probation, parole and post-prison supervision with their primary focus on child safety. Also under the Health Department, the Children's Assessment Service provides physical assessment, referrals to other services and health education for children in custody for abuse and neglect.
 - iii. Multnomah County houses the Children's Receiving Center which provides 24-hour service and care for abused and neglected children through the Christie School. This program provides a neutral and friendly environment for children who have been removed from their homes. Respite foster care is also available, and all children are accepted so as not to separate siblings.
 - iv. The Multnomah County District Attorney's office also plays an integral role in child abuse prevention through the Child Abuse Team which reviews and processes cases and reports involving child abuse in a domestic setting or by child care providers. Using an integrated team of prosecutors, child specialists, and police investigators, the team reviews, coordinates and investigates cases, making an informed decision on how to proceed.
- d. Citizens also have a role in helping prevent child abuse by understanding and becoming aware of the factors that lead to abuse. Each of us can reach out to a parent experiencing stress – a factor that can lead to abuse – by offering something as simple as baby-sitting or running errands. We can all learn that, while child abuse occurs in every segment of

society, the risks are greater in families that may be isolated from friends and relatives, and that are experiencing economic hardships or have substance abuse problems. By learning the warning signs of child abuse – including nervousness around adults, aggression, frequent or unexplained bruises and injuries, and low self-esteem -- we can make it our duty to report suspected abuse by calling the 24-hour Child Abuse Reporting Hotline at (503) 731-3100.

- e. All citizens of Multnomah County must work together to provide our children the love, guidance, and protection they need in order to protect them from abuse and give them the opportunity to achieve their dreams.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Proclaims:

1. The month of April 2007 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Multnomah County, Oregon to underscore our strong commitment to preventing child abuse and neglect.
2. The Board of County Commissioners calls upon all citizens to increase their participation in the effort to prevent child abuse in order to ensure that all children have the opportunity to grow up in a safe and nurturing environment. The Board encourages citizens to participate in events planned for the month of April to raise awareness of child abuse.
3. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes the hard work performed by Multnomah County departments and staff to reduce child abuse in our community by providing the important services to those children who are victims of abuse and to prevent further tragedy.

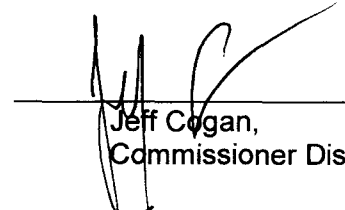
ADOPTED this 5th day of April, 2007.

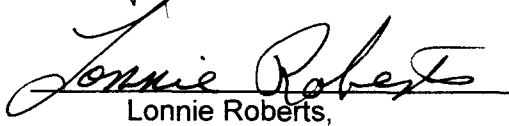
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FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**


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SUBMITTED BY Commissioner Lisa Naito