



March 16, 2023

Dear ICAN Partners and Friends,

As we experience historic atmospheric rivers, we're reminded of how differently the weather affects each of us. For some, it's a refreshing and welcome relief from the drought. For others, it's a reminder of the power of nature over our lives. Electrical outages, mudslides, roadway closures. And the disturbing impact of the cold and rain on homeless families. We're all a little SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder), and we desperately want to assure all children are warm, happy, and safe.

So, we direct our energy to the opportunities before us. To make a positive difference in the lives of children and families. To offer every individual, agency, and community the chance to be a part of the effort to assure the joy and safety of children.

**April is Child Abuse Prevention Month.** A time to promote the importance of awareness, engagement, and teamwork on behalf of children and families at risk.

One of our most important goals is to change cultural attitudes toward hitting in the same way cultural attitudes toward smoking were changed: Smoking is harmful to your health. Hitting is harmful to children's health, --- physical and mental. Our child death review findings tell us that most child abuse fatalities result from excessive discipline to very young children--blows to the head or torso. Mental health providers tell us that hitting does not improve children's behavior, but rather teaches them that hitting is the way to express anger. ICAN is committed to promoting positive non-violent ways to engage and discipline children.

### **Los Angeles County is a No-Hit Zone!**

- These are other messages that can save children's lives:
- Assure your baby sleeps safely in their own uncluttered crib,
- Safely Surrender your newborn at a hospital or fire department if you are unable to keep your baby safe.
- Offer support to a stressed parent of young children,



# INTER-AGENCY COUNCIL ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT County of Los Angeles



- Seek help for yourself if you are stressed or depressed.
- Call (800) 540-4000 if you believe a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect.
- Call 988 if you are experiencing a mental health crisis.

Below is an update on just a few of our current projects and activities. For more ICAN updates, please visit the [Ican4kids.org](http://Ican4kids.org) website.

## ICAN Policy Committee Meeting and Release of Annual Reports:

The Policy Committee Meeting was held virtually on January 19, 2023. **District Attorney George Gascon and Sheriff Robert G. Luna** co-chaired the meeting. Key issues with calls for action by our city, county and state agencies were presented.

ICAN released our Annual Reports including The State of Child Abuse in Los Angeles County; The Report of the ICAN Child Death Review Team; and the Safely Surrendered and Abandoned Infants Report. These reports can be downloaded at [Ican4kids.org](http://Ican4kids.org).

LA County Department Heads in attendance included **DCFS Director Brandon T. Nichols, DPSS Director Jackie Contreras, Mental Health Director Lisa Wong, U.S Attorney Martin Estrada, City Attorney Hydee Feldstein Soto, County Fire Chief Anthony Marrone and Superintendent of LA County Office of Education, Debra Duardo**. Each expressed commitment to the safety and well-being of children and support for ICAN's work. The pandemic and aftermath have resulted in a mental health crisis in children including behavioral disorders and anxiety. Schools are working with children in a variety of wellness programs to help them cope. Child Welfare is promoting partnerships and moving toward a focus on prevention. The Office of Education is working to educate students and parents regarding the dangers of fentanyl.

The **Nexus XXVI Conference, Violence Within the Home and It's Effects on Children**, will be held on March 30, 2023 at the California Endowment in Downtown LA. Virtual attendance spots are still available. [Click here to for more information!](#)

## ICAN Spotlight:

Did you know that LA County has 12 Child Abuse Prevention Councils that are community-based throughout Los Angeles County? The





mission of the councils is to prevent child abuse and neglect, focusing on the unique and diverse populations they represent, and to educate the public about child abuse and family violence issues. The councils offer numerous training courses and events throughout the year. To find out more about the Child Abuse Prevention Council closest to you, please visit: [latchildabusecouncils.org](http://latchildabusecouncils.org).

### **No Hit Zone Public Service Campaign**

The Board of Supervisors ordered that all LA County buildings are No Hit Zones and County Buildings are to display No Hit Zone Materials. Contact Marianne Yamato at [chavem@dcfs.lacounty.gov](mailto:chavem@dcfs.lacounty.gov) if you need Posters or Brochures.

### **Ahead...**

ICAN Associates Poster Art Contest judging will be held this month. An announcement of this year's winners will be announced at the April Board of Supervisor's Meeting.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month - visit our social media or [Ican4kids.org](http://Ican4kids.org) for events happening throughout the County.

***Thank you for all you do to educate, protect, and bring joy into the lives of children.***

***With respect and appreciation,***

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Deanne Tilton Durfee".

**Deanne Tilton Durfee, Doc. Hc**  
**Executive Director, Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect**  
**(ICAN)**

