



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pedro Espada Jr.

Senator Espada Urges New Yorkers to Stand up for Children During National Child Abuse Prevention Month

PEDRO ESPADA, JR. April 1, 2010

| ISSUE: **FAMILIES, SOCIAL SERVICES, VICTIMS, CHILDREN, HUMAN RIGHTS**

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness about child abuse and encourage communities to take a stand for the safety and well-being of our children and underscore our commitment to preventing and responding appropriately to incidences of child abuse.

Increasing public awareness of the need to ensure the safety and welfare of children led to the passage of the first Federal child protection legislation in 1974, known as the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). While CAPTA has been amended many times over the years, most recently by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003, the purpose of the original legislation remains intact.

Thousands of New York children are facing physical and emotional abuse every day. It is important that we meet the needs of abused and neglected children so they may have a better life, and break the cycle of abuse that can lead to so many other deep-set troubles in adulthood, including perpetuating abuse for generations. We all must take the time to be more aware of child abuse and help families overcome this devastating problem.

In 2006, more than 1.25 million, or 1 in every 58 children in the United States were abused or neglected. In 2008, New York State Child Protective Services reported that more than 161,000 children were neglected and abused.

There are many ways to make a difference in preventing child abuse and neglect, which include:

- Learning the signs and symptoms of abuse.
- Report known or suspected child abuse to the local police department.
- Organizing an event to raise money for programs serving abused children.
- Helping out a stressed-out parent by offering to baby-sit, make dinner or just lend an understanding ear.
- Volunteering your time and talents to a facility that utilizes community volunteers.

For more information on these and others ideas for how to get involved go to <http://www.childhelp.org>.

If you think that a child may be at risk of child abuse or neglect, contact the New York State Child Abuse Hotline (State Central Register) at 1-800-342-3720.