



PULAALI'I NIKOLAO PULA
GOVERNOR

PULUMATAALA AE AE JR.
LT. GOVERNOR

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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**PROCLAMATION
NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH
April 2026**

- WHEREAS,** children are among our Territory's most vulnerable members and most valuable resources, helping to shape the future of American Samoa; and
- WHEREAS,** positive childhood experiences, such as loving caregivers and safe, stable, and nurturing relationships, can help mitigate trauma and the negative effects of adverse childhood experiences while promoting the social, emotional, and developmental well-being of children; and
- WHEREAS,** childhood trauma can have long-term psychological, emotional, and physical effects throughout an individual's lifetime and may affect future generations of their family; and
- WHEREAS,** children who live in families with access to concrete economic and social support are less likely to experience abuse and/or neglect; and
- WHEREAS,** childhood trauma, including abuse and neglect, is a serious problem affecting every community, including American Samoa, and finding solutions requires the input and action of everyone; and
- WHEREAS,** The number of child protective services cases in American Samoa continues to grow every year. Since October 2021, child abuse and neglect cases have increased by more than 53%. The Department of Human and Social Services is currently overseeing 932 child protective services cases because of abuse, neglect, and other safety concerns; and
- WHEREAS,** prevention is possible through partnerships fostered among families and stakeholders, including, but not limited to, the Department of Human and Social Services, prevention advocates, child welfare professionals, the education and health sectors, community and nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, businesses, and law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that, to address the public health issue of abuse and neglect, we must work together to change hearts and minds through storytelling and shared experiences, center the needs of families, break down bias and barriers, and inspire action from both expected and unexpected partners in prevention; and

WHEREAS, we are committed to advancing equitable, responsive, and effective systems that ensure all children and families are healthy, safe, and thriving; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the need to intentionally prioritize children and invest in additional prevention initiatives, including home visiting and family-strengthening programs, economic assistance programs, and community-based child welfare and abuse prevention services at the national, state, and territorial levels; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, PULAALI’I NIKOLAO PULA, Governor of the Territory of American Samoa, do hereby proclaim April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month in the Territory and call upon our people to observe this month by building a narrative of hope for children and families through collaboration and the creation of an ecosystem of primary prevention.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affixed my signature and the seal of my office on this 30th day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-six.



PULAALI’I NIKOLAO PULA
Governor