



News Release

Communication Services
5334 South Prince Street
Littleton, Colorado 80120
Phone: 303-795-5467
Fax: 303-734-5470
www.arapahoegov.com

For release: April 7, 2015

Contact:

YVETTE YEON

Communication Services Specialist II

Direct: 303-636-1945

Mobile: 720-785-0714

Email: yeon@arapahoegov.com

Arapahoe County helps kick off statewide child abuse and neglect hotline

Commissioner Nancy Sharpe joins Gov. Hickenlooper, state legislators and the Colorado Department of Human Services at the State Capitol to promote 1-844-CO-4-KIDS.

Littleton, Colo. – In observance of National Child Abuse Prevention Month, Arapahoe County showed support for Colorado's new statewide child abuse and neglect hotline as it was recognized at the Colorado State Capitol today.

As part of Hickenlooper's Child Welfare Plan "Keeping Kids Safe and Families Healthy," the new hotline serves Colorado's 64 counties and two tribal nations, allowing the system to route all calls to its appropriate counties through one number.

Coloradans are encouraged to dial 1-844-CO-4-KIDS to speak directly with a certified call-taker 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and report any suspected child abuse and neglect happening nearby.

Joining Gov. Hickenlooper, Reggie Bicha, Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Human Services and others at the launching event, Chair of Colorado Counties, Inc., Health and Human Services Steering Committee and Arapahoe County Commissioner Nancy Sharpe stressed how child abuse and neglect is an important community issue.

"Not one person or one agency can do the work of prevention alone," said Sharpe. "We are all responsible to partner to ensure our children are safe and we now have one number statewide and the message to the public is 'be their voice and make the call'.

In Colorado, 72 percent of calls of potential child abuse and neglect come from mandatory reporters - professionals mandated under law to report their concerns immediately. 1-844-CO-4-KIDS will strengthen our capacity to receive concerns about children from those closest to a family like our babysitters, neighbors, relatives and friends.

The kick-off event drew tremendous support from various child welfare organizations and professionals who have dedicated their lives to protecting children and families.

"I would like to thank child protection workers across the state for their tireless dedication to protecting children," said Sharpe. "They are not often recognized for the lifesaving work that they do and I want to publicly thank all of them for their service to the children of Colorado."

Arapahoe County is one of the largest counties in Colorado. The County's crisis hotline received nearly 30,000 calls in 2014. Of those calls, nearly 9,600 were concerns of possible child abuse, neglect or a youth beyond a parent's control.

The Arapahoe County Department of Human Services believes the new hotline will prompt an increase in the number of calls received this year.

The statewide hotline started taking calls Jan. 1, 2015 and has already received 54,381 calls from concerned citizens, resulting in 8,196 screened-in reports of child abuse and neglect.

If you or someone you know is worried about a child, don't waste time hesitating, dial 1-844-CO-4-KIDS and we'll take it from there. A child's very life, safety and welfare could depend on you.

To learn more about the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline and how to identify the signs of child abuse and neglect, go to CO4Kids.org.

To view photos go to this link:

<ftp://ftp.arapahoegov.com/Pub/Communication%20Services/Photos/Human%20Services/Child%20Abuse%20State%20Hotline%20Press%20Conference%20Nancy%20Sharpe/>

Connect with Arapahoe County

Stay informed about Arapahoe County. Sign up for news releases, agendas and updates to our website via our *Notify Me* Link at www.arapahoegov.com. Or, connect with us via Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.