

Resolution

No. 25-92

RECOGNIZING APRIL 2025 AS CHILD ABUSE
PREVENTION MONTH IN MAUI COUNTY AND
THE ROLE OF PREVENTION IN LONG-TERM
RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE FOR MAUI
COUNTY'S 'OHANA AND WORKFORCE

WHEREAS, all children deserve to be in an environment that keeps them safe from abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, child abuse and neglect affect all socioeconomic groups, educational, religious, ethnic, and cultural groups, with the highest rates affecting children of native Hawaiian ancestry; and

WHEREAS, adverse childhood experiences, or “ACEs,” are traumatic events or unstable environments that children experience before age 18 that can harm social, cognitive, and emotional functioning and undermine the safe, stable, nurturing relationships and surroundings that keiki need to thrive; and

WHEREAS, on February 20, 2024, Governor Josh Green, M.D. designated Hawai‘i a trauma-informed state, with the express goals of alleviating impact of ACEs throughout the State and building family resilience; and

WHEREAS, research has shown that we can strengthen our communities and support our families through the development of protective factors, which allow parents or guardians to cope with their day-to-day stresses; and

WHEREAS, knowledge of childhood development, learned social and emotional competence, and concrete support—such as access to child care and health care—are protective factors linked to a lower incidence of child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, enacting family-centered policies enhances economic security and boosts protective factors, such as increasing financial resilience, investing in prevention programs, strengthening community resources, and

WHEREAS, ensuring the well-being and retention of Maui County's healthcare and human-service workforce is critical to long-term recovery efforts, and initiatives such as "Healing the Healers" have demonstrated the need for ongoing investment in workforce support and professional development; and

WHEREAS, the aftermath of the 2023 wildfires has placed increased demands on Maui County's social-service providers, who continue to struggle with workforce shortages and sustaining critical services for families; and

WHEREAS, human-service agencies, such as those in the Ho'oikaika Partnership, are creating a seamless safety net, including navigation services and other support for children and their caregivers; and

WHEREAS, cross-sector, collaborative partnerships have proven effective in strengthening families, promoting protective factors, and fostering a sense of belonging among Maui County families; and

WHEREAS, the County of Maui has a moral obligation and shared responsibility to protect every child from abuse, neglect, maltreatment, or exploitation and to protect and to support all families on Lānaʻi, Maui, and Molokai; and

WHEREAS, by recognizing April 2025 as Child Abuse Prevention Month, the Council can recommit to promoting a healthier and safer community; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it recognizes April 2025 as Child Abuse and Prevention Month and the role of prevention in long-term recovery and resilience for Maui County's 'ohana and workforce; and
2. That certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to Edeluisa Baguio-Larena, CEO, Maui Family Support Services, Inc.; Paul Tonnessen, Executive Director, Friends of the Children's Justice Center of Maui; Dean Wong, Executive Director, Imua Family Services; Amanda Pump, M.S., CSAC, ICADC, President and CEO, Child and Family Services; Ryan

Resolution No. 25-92

Kusumoto, President and CEO, Parents and Children Together; Elliot Kawaiho'olana Mills, Chair, Board of Trustees, Kamehameha Schools; William C. Bell, Ph.D., President and Chief Executive Officer, Casey Family Programs; Debbie Cabebe, Chief Executive Officer, Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.; Ryan Yamane, Director of Human Services, State of Hawai'i; Elladine Olevao, Child Welfare Services Branch Administrator, Department of Human Services, State of Hawai'i; Valerie M. Kato, Deputy Director of Health, Department of Health, State of Hawai'i; Debbie Kim Morikawa, Deputy Director for Health Resources, Department of Health, State of Hawai'i; Marian Tsuji, Deputy Director for Behavioral Health, Department of Health, State of Hawai'i; Kimberly Arakaki, Chief, Maternal and Child Health Branch Chief, Department of Health, State of Hawai'i; Lori Tsuhako, Director of Human Concerns, County of Maui; and the Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor, County of Maui.

INTRODUCED BY:

_____  _____
GABE JOHNSON