



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Local Agency Launches Child Safety Campaign to Celebrate Child Abuse Prevention Month**

**GAINESVILLE, FLA** – Partnership for Strong Families (PSF), the lead community-based care agency for Florida Judicial Circuits 3 and 8, announced today the launch of a multi-tiered campaign to increase the safety and well-being of children in the community. The campaign coincides with Child Abuse Prevention Month, celebrated nationally in April.

Throughout the month, PSF will help to empower families to keep their children safe by providing information, resources and greater awareness of common risks of child harm. The campaign will specifically focus on safe sleep environments, water safety, choosing appropriate child care and car safety. These factors are the four leading causes of child harm and death in the state of Florida.

PSF will have a variety of resources for families available at the Library Partnership Resource Center, SWAG Family Resource Center and Cone Park Library Resource Center, all of which are located in Gainesville. Items include door/window alarms, door knob covers, safety latches for cabinets and drawers, outlet covers and infant sleep sacks. Volunteers at the centers are also prepared to have conversations with patrons about ways to help make sure their children are safe.

Additionally, these safety items will be available at the agency's newest resource center, the Tri-County Community Resource Center, which opened to the community in Chiefland on March 23.

"The opening of the Tri-County Community Resource Center is a great step forward in increasing the safety and stability of children in Dixie, Gilchrist and Levy counties," stated Stephen Pennypacker, president/CEO of Partnership for Strong Families. "We know that our resource centers in Gainesville are making a great impact, and we look forward to seeing the same results in the Tri-County community."

Safety tips and updates will be shared daily on the agency's social media sites including Facebook, Twitter and their newly-launched Instagram page.

"This year during Child Abuse Prevention Month, it is our goal to raise more than just awareness. We are working to increase the community's ability to keep children safe," stated Jenn Petion, director of community and government relations. "We hope the social media component of our campaign helps to increase the community's ability to identify common risk factors and signs of child abuse or neglect."

PSF has also joined child-serving agencies from across the community in planting pinwheel gardens in front of their offices and resource centers. The largest pinwheel garden can be seen in front of North Florida Regional Medical Center. The pinwheel gardens are an annual tradition that serve as a reminder of the happy, healthy childhood that all children deserve.

To learn more about Partnership for Strong Families, please visit [www.pfsf.org](http://www.pfsf.org).

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**About Partnership for Strong Families:**

Partnership for Strong Families is the lead community-based care agency for Florida Judicial Circuits Three and Eight, including Alachua County. PSF is contracted by the Florida Department of Children and Families to deliver comprehensive child welfare services to children who are victims of abuse and neglect. Partnership for Strong Families also works with at-risk families to prevent child abuse and to decrease the risk of children entering the foster care system. PSF serves more than 5,000 children in 13 counties annually.