



COMMISSIONERS OF CUMBERLAND COUNTY

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Protecting Children and Preserving Families Doesn't Stop Because of COVID-19

"Now more than ever, it's so important for the community to help keep kids safe," said McElwee

Carlisle, PA – During this time when children and families are socially isolated, we all need to ensure that children are safe, and families get the help they need by utilizing the services of Cumberland County Children and Youth. The office is operational 24 hours/day; 7 days/week.

Caseworkers continue to assess new reports of suspected child abuse and neglect either in person or by video conferencing when necessary. The agency continues to assist families who are receiving supportive services; while, caseworkers contact families weekly to assess needs, and help families get connected to appropriate community resources. Caseworkers are still doing in home calls, and Children and Youth staff has personal protective equipment to protect families, and themselves while still doing family assessments.

"During this time when children and families are socially isolated, please check in with them to see if they need any support or assistance, said Children and Youth Administrator, Necole McElwee. "Most families are not having regular contact with schools, churches, or other extracurricular activities where they usually go for support. Now more than ever, it's so important for the community to help keep kids safe."

Signs of neglect or abuse:

Physical Abuse: Physical and Behavioral Indicators

- Unexplained injuries; inconsistent explanations of injuries; bruises in various stages of healing
- Fear of going home
- Extreme apprehensiveness/vigilance
- Pronounced aggression or passivity
- Play includes abusive behavior or talk
- Fear of parent or caregiver

Sexual Abuse: Physical and Behavioral Indicators

- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Sexually promiscuous
- Developmental age-inappropriate sexual play and/or drawings

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- Cruelty to animals or others
- Fire setting
- Anxious

Mental Abuse: Physical and Behavioral Indicators

- Frequent psychosomatic complaints; nausea, stomachache, headache
- Self-harm
- Speech disorders
- Expressing feelings of inadequacy and fearful of trying new things
- Overly compliant
- Poor peer relationships; Excessive dependence on adults
- Eating disorders

Neglect: Physical and Behavioral Indicators

- Lack of adequate medical and dental care
- Often hungry & significantly underweight
- Lack of shelter
- Developmental delays
- Persistent untreated conditions; head lice, diaper rash
- Exposure to hazards; illegal drugs, rodent/insect infestation, mold
- Dirty clothing, inappropriate for the weather
- Not registered in school
- Inadequate or inappropriate supervision
- Poor impulse control
- Frequently fatigued

If you are concerned about a child, and want to make a referral, please call 717.240.6120 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. or call Cumberland County’s Department of Public Safety at 717.243.4121 from the Carlisle area; 717.238.9676 from the West Shore; and 717.532.8878 from the Shippensburg area.

Residents can contact Pennsylvania’s ChildLine, a 24 hour hotline, 1.800.932.0313 to make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect.

For more information regarding indicators of suspected child abuse or neglect, please visit www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov.

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