

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 57

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman BRITNEE N. TIMBERLAKE

District 34 (Essex and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Designates April of each year as “Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating April of each year as “Child
2 Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month” in New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, The month of April of each year is currently designated as
5 “Child Abuse Awareness Month” in New Jersey; and
6 **WHEREAS**, The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
7 recommends evidence-based strategies to help prevent child abuse
8 and neglect, including public education campaigns, caregiver
9 support programs, and parenting skills education initiatives; and
10 **WHEREAS**, Child abuse can be physical, emotional, or sexual in
11 nature; and
12 **WHEREAS**, Neglect is the most common form of child maltreatment;
13 and
14 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey Department of Children and Families
15 estimates that, in 2017, three in 100 children in the State were
16 subjected to abuse or neglect; and
17 **WHEREAS**, Public health research shows that child abuse and neglect
18 can cause long-term trauma that has life-long health, psychological,
19 cognitive, and economic repercussions; and
20 **WHEREAS**, Studies indicate that children who experience neglect or
21 abuse are more likely to abuse their own children in the future; and
22 **WHEREAS**, All children are safer when adults in the community
23 recognize the signs of child neglect and abuse, and know how to
24 report suspected cases; and
25 **WHEREAS**, All sectors of the State, including law enforcement,
26 medical professionals, schools, courts, houses of worship,
27 numerous public and private agencies, and media outlets have
28 joined forces to promote public awareness and community
29 involvement in keeping children safe and nurtured during the month
30 of April and throughout the year; now, therefore,
31
32 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
33 *State of New Jersey:*
34
35 1. Section 2 of P.L.1992, c.42 (C.36:2-30) is amended to read
36 as follows:
37 2. The month of April is permanently designated **【and**
38 declared**】** as “Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month” in
39 the State of New Jersey.
40 (cf:P.L.1992, c.42, s.2)
41
42 2. (New section) The Governor is respectfully requested to
43 annually issue a proclamation calling upon public officials, faith
44 communities, community organizations, and citizens of this State to
45 become involved in efforts aimed at preventing our children from
46 being abused and neglected.
47
48 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

1 STATEMENT

2

3 This joint resolution amends current law, which designates the
4 month of April of each year as “Child Abuse Awareness Month” in
5 New Jersey. This resolution permanently designates April as
6 “Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month,” to coincide with
7 National Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month.

8 The additional emphasis on child abuse prevention reflects
9 recommendations by the federal Centers for Disease Control and
10 Prevention (CDC) aimed at preventing child abuse. There are ample
11 public health data showing that child abuse victims are at higher
12 risk for substance abuse, lower educational attainment, and
13 involvement in criminal activities later in life. According to the
14 CDC, the total lifetime cost of child abuse and neglect in the United
15 States was approximately \$124 billion in 2008. However, the CDC
16 reports that evidence-based programs, such as parental skills
17 education, caregiver support programs, and public education
18 campaigns, are effective tools in reducing the incidence and
19 prevalence of child abuse and neglect.