



**Know More, Say More, Do More!**

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For Immediate Release

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**New website that strives to help end child abuse in Niagara**

Unprecedented partnership of 14 local agencies launches an online support tool to help fight child abuse

**Niagara, ON - March 28, 2017** – Partners to End Child Abuse Niagara (PECAN) announced today, the official launch of a new website, [www.endchildabuse Niagara.com](http://www.endchildabuse Niagara.com).

The site represents months of collaboration by members of the committee, comprised of 14 Niagara agencies who share a deep concern about the tragedy of child abuse.

PECAN was formed in November 2014 when the Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara invited like-minded agencies and educational institutions to unite with a common purpose. After a series of consultations, PECAN concluded that there was a need for a one-stop hub of information for the public to access child abuse support programs in Niagara.

The idea for [www.endchildabuse Niagara.com](http://www.endchildabuse Niagara.com) was born and work began.

“Our partnership brings together the expertise within our local agencies to provide programs to help children, families and community organizations deal with child abuse,” says PECAN chair Andrea Jack. “The challenge is making these resources readily available”.

The new website not only provides valuable information on prevention, awareness and how to respond to child abuse, it also features a comprehensive database of all support programs offered by the PECAN partners.

Visitors can easily identify programs that address their specific concerns, from “what is child abuse?” to “what do I do if I suspect a child is being abused?” Our goal is to support our community groups and families to take the first critical step to find information and help a child. Search filters allows users to search by age, program needs and make that connection to a particular program provided by our local agencies. Detailed program descriptions and contact information give the site it’s true “one-stop” nature.

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PECAN partners include:

- The Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara
- Family and Children's Services Niagara
- The John Howard Society of Niagara
- Niagara Region Sexual Assault Centre
- Women's Place of South Niagara Inc
- Niagara Chapter – Native Women Inc
- Niagara Public Health (Niagara Region)
- Positive Living Niagara
- Red Cross
- Niagara Catholic District School Board
- District School Board of Niagara
- Brock University
- YWCA Niagara
- Pathstone Mental Health

Funding for the website was made possible by generous grants from the District School Board of Niagara, Port Colborne Hydro, John Howard Society of Niagara, Niagara Catholic District School Board and St. Catharines Rotary Club. The PECAN website was designed and supported by local web developer, 180 Marketing.

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### **Statistics – child abuse in Niagara**

- FACS Niagara responded to 5,842 concerns from the community regarding the care and safety of a child (ie risk of abuse or neglect)
- 4,236 families in Niagara received child protection services from FACS
- 97% of the children served were able to remain in the care of their families with support and assistance

*Stats provided by Family and Children's Services Niagara for the year 2015 – 2016.*

### **Quotes:**

*"Every person in the community has a duty to report their concerns regarding the possible abuse or neglect of children," said Anna Bozza, Executive Director of Family and Children's Service Niagara. "Child abuse prevention starts with education and*

*awareness, a key component of this new web site."*

*"Pathstone Mental Health is extremely pleased to be one of the Niagara Region's Partners to End Child Abuse (PECAN)" said Bill Helmeczi Director of Mental Health Services at Pathstone. "The goal of this group is to foster a community of professionals that have joined together for the common purpose of facilitating information that promotes safety and security for children and youth of Niagara, while fostering a collective proactive response that enhances the lives of children and youth."*