

# Prevent Abuse and Neglect through Dental Awareness



P.

A.

N.

D.

A.

**“She’s not hiding,  
she’s hurting.” SM**

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## The P.A.N.D.A. Coalition

More than 9 million children, adults and the elderly are victims of family violence each year in the US. Almost three million children are reported as being abused or neglected each year (NCCAN, 2002). By state law, dentists in every state are required to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to authorities., and are ethical bound to provide appropriate intervention for adult and elderly victims. However, dentists get involved less than one percent of the time. (Mouden, 1994) This conflicts with data showing that 65-75% of cases of physical abuse involve injury to the head, neck and mouth (Becker, 1978; da Fonesca, 1992).

The coalition was founded in Missouri, and developed by Delta Dental of Missouri as the corporate sponsor. P.A.N.D.A. coalitions are now in place in 46 US states and 7 international programs.

You have a chance to help spread the news about P.A.N.D.A. and to help prevent abuse and neglect. Please take a moment to see how you can become involved in a P.A.N.D.A. coalition in Arkansas. Help make a difference in someone’s life.

## Educational Programs

The P.A.N.D.A. educational programs have proven that education can dramatically improve dentists’ response toward preventing family violence. The P.A.N.D.A. Coalition offers a variety of educational opportunities aimed at providing information on the prevention of abuse and neglect. Although originally designed for dental audiences, the presentations can be tailored for a variety of groups, from lay persons to those with considerable background in health care or family violence.

The presentations focus on the role everyone has in decreasing the incidence of abuse and neglect. Many people find family violence a difficult problem to confront. However, P.A.N.D.A. seminars will help them realize that their involvement in recognizing and preventing family violence cannot only save someone from further abuse, it may save a life.

The presentations include specific clinical aspects of abuse and neglect recognizable in specific settings. State-specific statutory and liability aspects are also addressed. State laws relating to child abuse reporting are discussed, and health professionals are given guidelines to prevent exposure to liability. The seminars also cover preventing domestic violence and elder abuse and neglect. While portions of the presentation may be uncomfortable for some individuals to view, the seminar is given in a positive light. The outcome is an increased awareness of the positive steps all citizens can take to stop abuse and neglect. The various presentations are suitable for all dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, physicians, nurses, day care workers, teachers and anyone who works with, or cares about, children and other victims of family violence.

## P.A.N.D.A. Coalition Members

- Delta Dental Plan of Arkansas
- Office of Oral Health, AR DHHS
- Arkansas State Dental Association
- Arkansas Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence Commission
- Arkansas State Dental Hygienists’ Assoc.
- Arkansas Dental Assistants’ Assoc.
- UAMS Dept of Dental Hygiene
- UAFS Dept of Dental Hygiene
- DHHS Child Protective Services
- AR Coalition Against Domestic Violence

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