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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April Is Child Abuse Prevention Month

(Woodland, CA) –April 12, 2013– District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced today that April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. During this month and all year, the public is encouraged to remember that prevention is the key to a healthy tomorrow for our children and our community. “We must have a zero tolerance standard for child abuse in Yolo County,” said Reisig. Reisig reports that while the DA’s Office vigorously prosecutes child abusers, his office is dependent on community members to identify and report suspected child abuse when they are concerned about a child.

“Child abuse is often a crime that goes unnoticed or unreported,” reports Cameron Handley, Director of Yolo County’s Multi-Disciplinary Interview Center (MDIC). “Many people believe that they have to be certain that abuse is happening before reporting it,” said Handley. “That is simply not true.” Handley reports that calling the Child Abuse Hotline does not mean that abuse is happening. It provides trained professionals with information that they use to assess the situation and intervene on a child’s behalf if necessary. “Considering what’s at stake, it is always best to error on the side of caution and make the call if you are at all concerned about a child’s safety,” said Handley.

Child abuse happens behind closed doors. The only way the appropriate agencies find out about abuse and can help a child, is often because that child confided in a trusted person. Many times that person is the only one that child tells and, most often, that first disclosure includes only a portion of what that child is experiencing. How that initial person reacts to the child’s disclosure is critical to that child’s ability to recover and also to whether the child will seek help in the future.

If you are concerned about a child, please do not hesitate to call the Yolo County Child Abuse Hotline: 1-888-400-0022. To find out more about child abuse prevention and what you can do to help protect our community’s children, please visit the Yolo County Children’s Alliance and Child Abuse Prevention Council at: www.yolokids.org/child-abuse-prevention.

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