

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Contact:

Jeff Myers

Idaho Youth Ranch

208-936-5608

[jmyers@youthranch.org](mailto:jmyers@youthranch.org)

## Idaho Youth Ranch Raises Awareness for Child Abuse

As child abuse in Idaho hits new highs, Idaho Youth Ranch says,  
"We're here to help."

[Boise, Idaho] (April 6, 2021)—Idahoans will see blue pinwheels popping up at Idaho Youth Ranch Thrift Stores across the state. The nonprofit is raising awareness for child abuse in April as Idaho cases hit new highs, a new study confirms.

"Most of the kids who come to Idaho Youth Ranch have a history of trauma and many have experienced Child Abuse," said Scott Curtis, CEO of Idaho Youth Ranch. "As more kids start returning to school under the care of teachers and mandatory reporters, we are expecting to see that number increase."

April is National Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month. In January 2021, the Idaho State Legislature reported that incidents of child sexual abuse in Idaho increased by 17%, with a total of 272 cases in Ada and Canyon Counties alone. That same report showed 83 cases in Kootenai County, 53 cases in Bonneville County, 67 cases in Bannock County, 65 cases in Twin Falls County, and 64 cases in Bonner County.

In a recent report by the Idaho Department for Health and Welfare, 37.6% of Idaho adults experienced emotional abuse as children, and 19.2% experienced physical abuse as children.

Idaho Youth Ranch is a nonprofit that uses trauma-focused therapies to help youth and families recover from the impacts of abuse as well as other behavioral and mental health challenges. Idaho Youth Ranch provides these life-changing counseling and therapy sessions both in-office and over video throughout the state of Idaho.

Child abuse takes many forms including neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation, and emotional abuse, each of which are measured as part of the groundbreaking Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), study. The CDC and Kaiser Permanente have studied ACEs since they have proven in the late 1990s to have a negative lifelong physical, emotional, and mental health.

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare recently released a study on the prevalence and impact of ACEs on Idahoans. Curtis said, "The research the state released showed that Idaho has nearly double the number of youth experiencing four or more adverse childhood experiences than the national average. Unfortunately, the data also reaffirmed the deep negative impact these have on lifelong mental and physical health and behavioral health."

"We often talk about the ACEs to help people understand what most of the kids at Idaho Youth Ranch are dealing with," said Curtis. "Young people come to us and they are often acting out or struggling because of trauma. It is especially heartbreaking for those who have experienced child abuse."

"The good news is that the research also shows that we can treat these kids and prevent many

of the lifelong impacts, including the generational cycles of abuse that plague too many Idaho families. We strongly support the community efforts during April's Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention month and encourage all Idahoans to reach out for help if someone you know is a victim and to be aware of the warning signs of child abuse," said Curtis.

Idaho Youth Ranch will distribute information about the warning signs of child abuse in their 24 thrift store locations around Idaho to help raise awareness.

"This is not a 'somewhere else' problem. This is an Idaho problem, and we have to have conversations about what our kids are facing," Curtis said. "We rely on the generosity of the community to make sure these kids get the help they need. Our programs are largely funded by private donors without whom these kids would struggle to get the help they need. We want to remind the community that our kids need help."

If you have concerns about a young person and want to know more about the impacts of childhood trauma, go to <https://www.youthranch.org/what-is-childhood-trauma>

#### About Idaho Youth Ranch

Idaho Youth Ranch is a nonprofit organization that unites for Idaho's youth by providing accessible programs and services that nurture hope, healing, and resilience. Idaho Youth Ranch offers emergency shelter and residential care; outpatient therapy including TeleMental Health, equine-assisted therapy, and trauma-focused counseling; job readiness training; adoption services; and more for kids and their families. We also operate a network of thrift stores that serve as workforce development locations, allow the public to support our mission, and help fund our youth programs and services. Learn more at [www.youthranch.org](http://www.youthranch.org).

###