

Healthy Families Equal Healthy Communities

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, where we can bring awareness to the many families in our community that are working towards having healthy relationships. The struggles that every family faces vary by circumstance, and there is no big book on how to parent your child.



MY SHOT
By Penny Morris

Child abuse is such a heavy term, and many people don't know what it truly encompasses. It includes physical, emotional, and verbal abuse, and neglect. Most often, people are not intentionally trying to harm their children, but they may not know that hitting is physical abuse, or maybe they had never seen a healthy relationship with their parents or family and they are following what they learned. An important role that the state of California plays is that it mandates certain people who work in the community to report suspected child abuse to Child Protective Services.

Tahoe SAFE Alliance staff, school staff, child care providers, law enforcement, health care providers, and many more people are mandated to report any stories or witnessing of child abuse to CPS. Once a report is made, we as reporters have no control over what happens next. Often, people are scared to disclose or to consider what might happen with involvement of CPS. I spend a lot of time explaining to families what a response from CPS might look like, and that their focus is on safety and that they can help the family with safety planning and parenting skills. Once a report is made, CPS determines how the response should be handled, if at all. Often, a specialized advocate from the local Family Resource Center might be the only response needed, and they will visit the family and offer supportive services.

At Tahoe SAFE Alliance, our services are voluntary. When a family engages in services, an

amazing community response happens. We all work together to help them understand healthy relationships and healthy family responses. Any time Tahoe SAFE Alliance is working with another agency, we get consent from the person to share their information and work collaboratively; it is entirely their decision. We provide education to a family

or individual about healthy relationships, the effects of domestic violence on kids, and will have informal conversations about coping and parenting skills.

We also provide individual therapy to children and survivors of domestic violence, legal and educational advocacy, and help coordinate and make referrals, and we offer many more services to survivors of domestic violence. Tahoe SAFE Alliance also has a prevention program that works in the schools and community, offering presentations and groups providing education on healthy decision making, healthy relationships, and anti-bullying. The local family resource centers offer fantastic parenting classes in English and Spanish that many people rave about.

The family is at the center of the conversation and drives the process. It determines what services fit their needs best, and, as supporting agencies in the community, we work together to meet those needs. Child abuse affects every demographic of people, and as a community, the best we can do is have a united response. What each of us can do is model healthy behaviors, ask for help if we feel we need it, and report any abuse we see or hear about. All of it builds resilience in our kids and our community.

~ Penny Morris is the children's program manager at Tahoe SAFE Alliance. She lives in Truckee with her family, and holds a master's in public health from the University of Nevada, Reno.

SHINE ON

Worth a Shot



Tahoe City Lodge Project Critical for Future of Our Town

After experiencing business life in Tahoe City since 1978, I am very hopeful that the Tahoe City Lodge project will be



MY SHOT
By Douglas Dale

approved as soon as possible. It may be hard to imagine, but Tahoe City was once a thriving mountain ski town both in the winter and the summer. Despite an extraordinary natural setting, Tahoe City can no longer compete with Squaw Valley, Northstar, and Truckee. Tahoe City desperately needs an upscale hotel — that is the request we most often hear from our guests at Wolfdale's. I have also yet to meet a local business owner that doesn't agree. Tahoe City deserves a chance to prosper again as it moves into the future.

There are many benefits to the proposed Tahoe City Lodge. Removal of the old commercial complex at the entrance to our town, private money into the community, ongoing stimulation of our struggling Tahoe City economy, and improved recreation at the Tahoe City Golf Course and Winter Park are just a few of the ways this project will revitalize our town. As the Tahoe City Lodge will

face Commons Beach and has the golf course at its back door, visitors will be able to immediately enjoy the various activities our community has to offer. Environmentally, it advances our goal with both its green design and restoration of lands. It also addresses and aligns with the Tahoe City vision principles as part of the area plan process. This is what our community has desired, and it is a real tangible example bringing to life our Tahoe City visioning principles.

Life is all about timing. The Tahoe City Lodge project delivers exactly what our town needs right now. I only ask that the local community and the involved agencies respect the immediate need for this project to move forward in an urgent manner. An opportunity like this is rare, critical, and time sensitive. I support this long-term investment into our community. Tahoe City Lodge is the smart development we have been waiting decades for to revitalize our town's economy in the most environmentally sustainable way. The agencies should move the Tahoe City Lodge towards the approval it deserves as soon as possible. The positive future of our town depends on it.

~ Douglas Dale has been the owner/chef of Wolfdale's Restaurant in Tahoe City since 1978. The long-time Tahoe City local has been involved in the Tahoe City Area Plan process and in creating the Tahoe City vision principles. He has been a residential property owner since 1984, and a Tahoe City commercial property owner since 1986.

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