

# Child abuse rates hard to pin down

By Caitlyn May  
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We know that between October 2016 and September 2017, the state of Oregon received 80,683 reports of child abuse or neglect. We know that just over 40,000 of those reports were referred for investigation and 32,075 investigations were completed. We know that 7,063 of those investigations yielded founded complaints of abuse, accounting for 11,000 victims. We know that 45 percent of those victims were younger than six years old. We know that 46.7 percent of those families had alcohol or drug use as the largest family stress factor in cases abuse was present and that domestic violence accounted for 29.5 percent.

What we don't know is the accurate rate of child abuse and neglect to confidently say it can be reduced by 90 percent by the year 2030.

90by30 has been working toward this goal since 2011 and hopes to continue to work to decrease the instances of child abuse and neglect through community partnerships and engagement. However, it may be impossible to definitively claim a reduction of 90 per-

cent since the group did not begin with a set rate of child abuse and neglect around the county.

"There's no community in the country who can answer that," said Jeff Todahl, co-director and director of research for the prevention of abuse and neglect.

While 90by30 may not be able to accurately claim a reduction of 90 percent by 2030, it is working to obtain a rate of child abuse and neglect; a task marred by the nature of the topic.

"I think it's the social norm that we don't really talk about this and that if we ask about it, it's an invasion of privacy," Todahl said. "Also, people feel nervous about it. It's hard to turn toward something as sensitive as abuse and neglect and worry that it will traumatize youth if you ask them."

The majority of the data collected by the state, including the report released annually entitled, "Child Welfare Data Book," comes from mandatory reporters such as doctors and teachers. However, according to Todahl, those numbers don't always tell the entire truth. For example, rates of child abuse and neglect may dip from one year to

the next but if school days are cut from the calendar, a common practice as school districts face budget cuts, then mandatory reporters have less interaction with children who may be facing abuse and neglect.

90by30, however, is hoping to collect more data to paint a more accurate picture of the situation. Four years ago, the group conducted a survey; given the definition of child abuse or neglect, residents were asked if they had experienced it in their own childhood. Thirty-seven percent said they had.

The group also has plans to go into the schools around the county and ask students a series of questions. And while the state conducts a survey of classrooms as well to compile data for its Healthy Teen Survey, Todahl says this survey is different, focusing specifically on questions about abuse and neglect, more specifically, about 170 of them.

The data will then be used to help combat abuse and neglect throughout the county utilizing community partners and programs such as the organization's baby box program. New parents

are given a box full of newborn essentials, including information that can lead to understanding rather than frustration. The goal, 90by30's Rachel Nordquist told The Sentinel previously, was to create a safe sleep system, prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and create a connection to the community for new parents.

The baby box is part of the fundamental programs issued by 90by30 in taking data and providing resources for parents or community members to reduce rates of abuse. In addressing statistics surrounding the most common timeframe for shaken baby syndrome cases, the baby box includes information on crying infants and reassures parents.

"The importance of the work that's happening in South Lane, from pinwheels in April to so many people knitting hats for the baby box, it goes on and on," Todahl said. "Cottage Grove is leading the county which means they're leading at the national level in many ways. We have people watching, asking if this place can figure out a way to significantly reduce child abuse."

## Pet tips 'N' tales

By Mary Ellen  
"Angel Scribe"



### Our 'Missing' Freeway Goats

Sadly, it is an end to an era for families who love counting the Sears Road rock quarry's goats. After 40 years, the famous freeway-hill climbers were re-homed to keep them alive. The eight animals are with experienced goat herder Michelle, happily mingling and munching with their new goat family on her fenced 50-acre ranch.

Boy, have they moved up in the world!

The ranch's amenities include fresh running water, trees, hills and their favorite snack, of course, blackberries. The blackberries were their downfall. After consuming all the berries near the rock quarry, the herd smelled the delicious aroma of more on the other side of the freeway.

Being adventuresome and hungry goats, they strolled through a hole in the fence, and began eating the blackberries beside I-5 freeway stopping 70-mph traffic. The department of transportation arrived and erected a GOATS ON HIGHWAY reader board sign to warn drivers. After the police were summoned for the third time in a week, they phoned the quarry with an ultimatum: "The goats are endangering traffic. The next time they are on the interstate they will be dispatched."

This statement began a desperate hunt to find the famous bearded-quarry squatters a new home.

Tina Fornoff, a.k.a. Fornoff Rocks, LLC., posted a note to Facebook's "What's Going On In Cottage Grove, Oregon" relating the urgency of the situation.

"Then the circus began!" said Tina. "An hour later, 15 people arrived with trailers trying to round up goats. It was mayhem. Eventually, the goats outsmarted everyone by climbing the steep hillside."

Tina went on to explain how, the next day, she tried corraling the herd into a hastily-rigged pen.

"What a fiasco! The goats kept breaking through, tearing



Where, oh where, have our freeway goats gone?

down — or jumping over — the pen," said Tina. "I sat for six hours bribing them to return to their favorite foods but to no avail."

Just as the quarry was closing and after she'd left, the goats arrived for their smorgasbord of alfalfa and veggies, so Tina rushed back. Fortunately, the rock-pit crew had corralled the herd. The crew each grabbed a goat directing them into the trailer.

"It was a joke thinking that once one was in the trailer the others would follow," said Tina. "The goats had never been in a trailer and they did not think it was time to start now."

After the young kids were loaded up, their mothers followed. Dozer saw this and jumped over the four foot panels onto a conveyor belt system, chased a few people around, and then took off up the hillside. Everyone scattered trying to avoid the 500 pound horned leader!

"There was no way for us to scale the hillside and grab him. For the next week, he remained elusive looking at us like we were circus clowns," Tina said. "We finally outsmarted him by tempting him with a 'new' girlfriend. Our she-lure worked! He could not resist meeting her. We slammed the gate closed and delivered him to his waiting herd."

"Dozer casually walked over to his old herd," said Michelle. "He was friendly and gentle with all of our other goats. He was a gentleman and let some goats cut in front of him to eat first. This was unlike his pit behavior where he insisted on eating first. I am happy to report that your freeway goats are very happy here."

Tina added that, "A 90-pound cougar is visiting the quarry, so the timing of the goat's removal is perfect. Drivers along I-5 freeway who have been watching them need to know that 'your' goats are safe and so are you. You can't have a herd of animals meandering across a freeway amongst speeding semi-trucks and family cars without an 'OH! OH!' We hope they will now live a long life."

#### Tips:

Please do not bring goats to the Sears rock pit quarry. The cougar is not their friend!

Share your fun, amazing or crazing pet tips and tales at [angelscribe@msn.com](mailto:angelscribe@msn.com) or Follow Pet Tips 'n' Tales on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/PetTipsandTales](http://www.facebook.com/PetTipsandTales). Adopt loving pets online at [www.PetFinder.com](http://www.PetFinder.com). For spay or neutering, call the Humane Society at 541-942-2789.

## Classes offered to become Master Recycler

Lane County Waste Management Division is offering a free course providing comprehensive training on local solid waste issues in Florence. Hear from local experts, tour local facilities and learn why things are (or are not) recyclable. The Waste Management Division hosts this course to help Lane County residents and businesses reduce, reuse, recycle and rethink waste habits.

Applications are available at [www.lanecounty.org/masterrecyclers](http://www.lanecounty.org/masterrecyclers) or by calling 541-682-2059.

Completed applications may be submitted by fax, email or regular mail.

The Master Recycler training course includes 35 hours of classroom instruction: nine consecutive Tuesday evening classes, a Saturday compost demonstration and two Saturday multi-site field trips to area solid waste and recycling sites.

Instructors are local experts in solid waste from business, government and non-profit sectors.

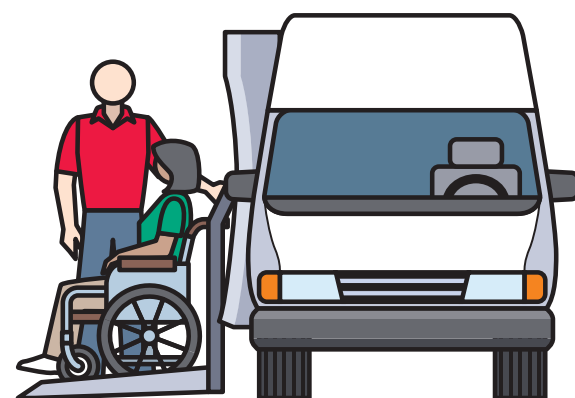
The course is free for those who volunteer 30 hours to educate and assist their communities in the year following the training. Those who do not wish to volunteer may pay a small fee.

More than 980 Lane County master recyclers have contributed more than 42,000 hours of education and assistance to local citizens and businesses since the program began in 2000.

In addition to attending class sessions and tours with local experts, all participants enroll in Oregon State University's "Recycling 101" online. The R101 course was developed by the Association of Oregon Recyclers. Normally valued at \$50 to \$75, R101 is free for Lane County Master Recycler students.

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# 6-day

## weather forecast

THURSDAY

78° | 48°



Partly Sunny

FRIDAY

76° | 47°



Partly Sunny

SATURDAY

67° | 41°



Partly Cloudy

SUNDAY

80° | 44°



Sunny

MONDAY

74° | 43°



Sunny

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76° | 42°



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