



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

# 25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 23, 2026**

## **Council Delegates join Division for Children and Family Services for Child Abuse Awareness Walk**



**Members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council joined the Division for Children and Family Services (DCFS) for the 2026 Child Abuse Awareness Walk**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — On Tuesday, members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council joined the Division for Children and Family Services (DCFS) for the 2026 Child Abuse Awareness Walk, standing alongside community members, advocates, and frontline workers to raise awareness and strengthen efforts to protect children across the Navajo Nation.

Council Delegates Germaine Simonson, Cherilyn Yazzie, Dr. Andy Nez, and Titus Nez participated in the walk, which began at the Navajo Nation Museum and concluded at the Navajo Nation Council Chamber. The event emphasized prevention, education, and shared community responsibility in addressing child abuse and supporting families.

“Protecting our children is a shared responsibility,” said Delegate Titus Nez. “We must ensure every child has a safe place to grow, to be heard, and to thrive. When we protect our children, we protect the future of our Nation.”

Participants included DCFS staff, community advocates, and families who engaged directly with Council Delegates, sharing their experiences and emphasizing the need for continued support, resources, and collaboration. Delegates expressed appreciation for DCFS employees and highlighted the importance of strengthening services, increasing the number of social workers, and expanding youth-focused programs.

Throughout the event, Council Delegates spoke about their ongoing commitment to child welfare and family support.

Delegate Simonson emphasized the need to reduce childhood trauma and its long-term impacts, noting that early adversity can affect a child's development and future well-being. She also highlighted efforts to launch a youth leadership initiative aimed at empowering young people and strengthening communities.

Delegate Yazzie addressed the importance of budget oversight, stressing that adequate funding is critical to sustaining programs and ensuring child welfare professionals have the support they need. She reaffirmed the Council's role in advocating for resources that directly benefit children and families.

Delegate Dr. Nez spoke about the connection between protecting children and protecting the environment, emphasizing a holistic approach to well-being. He noted that caring for children includes supporting their physical, emotional, and spiritual health, while also preserving the land that will sustain future generations.

Throughout the event, advocates reinforced a shared message: preventing child abuse requires open dialogue, community involvement, and culturally grounded solutions. They encouraged participants to continue speaking openly about child abuse, support families, and work together to break cycles of trauma.

DCFS Director Thomas Cody and Deputy Director Sonlatsa Jim also shared the division's mission and long-term vision.

"Our mission is to ensure every child and family is supported, so our youth can grow into strong, confident, and resilient individuals," said Deputy Director Jim.

The Child Abuse Awareness Walk highlighted the importance of prevention-focused strategies, including community partnerships, youth leadership development, and culturally relevant services.

Council Delegates reaffirmed their commitment to working alongside DCFS and community partners to create safer environments for children and families across the Navajo Nation.

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