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NEWS RELEASE



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**Childhood Matters Wellness Center Opens Its Doors
with Launch Day Ribbon Cutting Ceremony**

VENTURA, Calif. – Childhood Matters, a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering children and families through mental health support, will celebrate the grand opening of its new Childhood Matters Wellness Center (CMWC) on Thursday, April 24, 2025, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. with a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house at 2982 Martha Drive in Ventura.

The event will begin at 4:00 p.m. with welcome remarks from a representative of the Ventura Chamber of Commerce, followed by brief speeches from Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko and Shaleena Tareen, Founder and CEO of Childhood Matters.



The CMWC represents a meaningful collaboration between Childhood Matters, the District Attorney's Office, and the Ventura County Family Justice Center (VCFJC). The new space provided by the District Attorney's Office will provide low- to no-cost counseling services, therapeutic activities, and trauma-informed educational workshops for children, youth, and families in Ventura County. Through this partnership, the Center will offer on-site services at the VCFJC and serve as a training site for Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) students, beginning with a cohort from Pepperdine University.

"We are proud to support an initiative that not only expands access to care for children and families, but also helps grow the next generation of mental health professionals," said District Attorney Erik Nasarenko. "The Wellness Center is another step toward healing-centered justice and building safe, supportive environments for those who need it most."

Following remarks, attendees will gather at the front entrance for the official ribbon cutting ceremony with District Attorney Nasarenko and Ms. Tareen. Guests will then be invited to tour the Wellness Center, enjoy refreshments, and meet staff and volunteers.

The Childhood Matters Wellness Center will also showcase some of its impactful programs during the event, including:

- Coping Toolboxes — resource kits designed to support children during moments of grief, stress, or transition.
- Safe Spaces — trauma-sensitive rooms created at the Family Justice Center and Hall of Justice.
- Youth Ambassador Program — empowering young mental health advocates to lead change in their communities.
- Community workshops — including trauma-informed education sessions in partnership with the Ventura County Office of Education.

“Childhood Matters was born from the belief that every child deserves to feel safe, seen, and supported,” said Ms. Tareen. “We’re incredibly grateful for the collaboration and commitment from the DA’s Office, the VCFJC, and all the volunteers, donors, and ambassadors who helped bring this vision to life.”

The event will also feature Courthouse therapy dogs Comet and Trakr, who serve with the District Attorney’s Office and will be mingling with guests throughout the evening.

For more information about Childhood Matters and its programs, visit: childhoodmatters.org