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## **STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **The Joe Paterno Statue, Sanctions, and Looking Forward**

**CHICAGO, IL, July 23, 2012** – Many will question whether Joe Paterno's statue needed to be removed from Penn State's campus; noting the important work he did for the community, the university, and the athletes he coached.

Many more will decry the NCAA and Big Ten's decision to punish Penn State in the unprecedented fashion they have. They will say things like Penn State paid for the very investigation it is being punished for producing, a report that saved the NCAA and Big Ten countless dollars and time.

And even more will also ask why student athletes who had nothing to do with this horrible situation and the university at large should be punished for the actions, and non-actions, of the few who chose to do nothing, or worse, cover-up this case.

To make these arguments, however, is to ignore and blatantly dismiss the most important aspect of the situation: children were harmed and it could have been avoided

And because of this, there has to be not just consequences for this failure, but severe consequences. The leadership at Penn State, however, is looking forward, and we agree that to focus on these efforts, and offer our support along with the collective wisdom of our 49 state chapters nationally is the right thing to do.

We also think that this is a moment where we should all recognize that there are organizations at our nation's universities and colleges, and in communities across the country, that have been doing the right things on behalf of children for some time; and we all should take a moment to find out more about those organizations and how to support them:

- Our national partners Darkness to Light ([d2l.org](http://d2l.org)) and Stop It Now! ([stopitnow.org](http://stopitnow.org)), as well as, Prevent Child Abuse America ([preventchildabuse.org](http://preventchildabuse.org)); and
- Local organizations in communities like yours, including the Enough Abuse Campaign



([enoughabuse.org/](http://enoughabuse.org/)), The SAFE-T Program ([pcavt.org/the-safe-t-program.html](http://pcavt.org/the-safe-t-program.html)), Healthy Families America ([healthyfamiliesamerica.org](http://healthyfamiliesamerica.org)), and many others you can learn more about by contacting the Prevent Child Abuse America chapter in your state ([preventchildabuse.org/chapters/index.cfm](http://preventchildabuse.org/chapters/index.cfm)).

"We must recognize that the sanctions imposed today begin to correct a wrong that needs to be righted," said James M. Hmurovich, President & CEO, Prevent Child Abuse America. "We also must recognize that for the survivors of these terrible acts, it will take more than the 'punishment' of a university for them to heal, and our thoughts and prayers are with them. As a nation, we must ensure that the abuse of children never occurs. Prevention is possible; we know what to do, now let's see if we have the public and political will to not just change laws, but renew our commitment to children and change the norms of a culture that allowed this to even happen in the first place."

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#### **ABOUT PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AMERICA**

Prevent Child Abuse America, founded in 1972, works to ensure the healthy development of children nationwide while recognizing that child development is a building block for community development and economic development. We believe that communities across the country are doing innovative things with great results to prevent abuse and neglect from ever occurring, and what we need to do as a nation is commit to bringing this kind of ingenuity to communities everywhere. Based in Chicago, Prevent Child Abuse America has chapters in 49 states and over 400 Healthy Families America, home visitation sites in 37 states, the Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and Canada. For more information, please visit [preventchildabuse.org](http://preventchildabuse.org) and [healthyfamiliesamerica.org](http://healthyfamiliesamerica.org).