Taft turned out Friday morning to remember children who have died or suffered grievous injury at the hands of parents and caregivers and to find ways to better protect — the most vulnerable members of society.

It was a ceremonial flag raising of the National Children's Memorial Flag at Kern County Fire Station 21 in Taft as part of National Child Abuse Awareness month.

―This was a difficult ceremony but one we really needed to do,‖ Kern County Supervisor David Couch said as it ended.

Couch, Dena Murphy, interim director of the Kern County Department of Human Services, Taft Mayor Paul Linder, Kern County Fire Chief Brian Marshall and Kern County District Attorney Lisa Green all spoke before about 100 people who gathered in from of Station 21.

In the group was a family member of a victim of child abuse, 3-year-old Trinity Hanna of Taft.

Hanna died at the hands of her mother's boyfriend, Eric Foster, in 2012.

―I need to give a special call out to the grandmother of little Trinity Hanna,‖ Murphy said. ―She said little Trinity called out for her to be here

Foster is serving a 25-years-to-life term in state prison for Trinity's murder. Trinity's mother, Angela Monique Hanna, is serving a prison term for allowing the abuse to go on unreported and not seeking treatment until the child was dying. Green's office prosecuted Foster.

―Whenever a child is injured or neglected or killed it comes to my office for prosecution. When that happens it is too late,‖ Green said.

Children need more protection for the community, more people calling law enforcement or Child Protective Services as soon child abuse is seen or suspected, Green said.

―We haven't done a good job of protecting the most vulnerable members of our society if the Kern County District Attorney's Office gets involved,‖ Green said. ―I hope there comes a day when we don't have to talk about child abuse in Kern County.

Murphy spoke next.

She started by reading the names of four children who have died as a result of child abuse in Kern County already this year.

Their names are Sophia Lynn, age 1 year, Paige, 4 months, Jayden, 2 months and Karla, 2 years.

Linder presented Murphy with a resolution from the Taft City Council recognizing Child Abuse Awareness Month. The Children's National Memorial Flag was raised by the Kern County Fire Department Honor Guard.