

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE

McDonough County, Illinois

April 2018 Newsletter

Advocacy Network for Children Mission Statement: To protect and uphold the rights of children when wrongs have been committed against them; to help abused or neglected children have safe, permanent homes where they can thrive; to act as a powerful voice in these children's best interest and to educate the public about the plight of unrepresented children within the child welfare system.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month.

In last month's newsletter we discussed the disturbing facts and statistics of child abuse. Let's take a closer look at how we, both as individuals and as a community, can help to prevent a child from becoming a statistic.



What is prevention? The term "prevention" is typically used to represent activities that stop an action or behavior. It can also be used to represent activities that promote a positive action or behavior. Research has found that successful child abuse interventions must both reduce risk factors and promote protective factors to ensure the well-being of children and families.

Protective factors are conditions in families and communities that, when present, increase the health and well-being of children and families. They are attributes that serve as buffers, helping parents who might otherwise be at risk of abusing their children to find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress.

Prevention is the best hope for reducing child abuse and neglect and improving the lives of children and families. Strengthening families and preventing child abuse requires a shared commitment of individuals and organizations in every community.

AS A COMMUNITY, WE CAN:

Promote Child and Family Well-Being. Promoting well-being involves understanding and addressing child, youth, and caregiver functioning in physical, behavioral, social, and cognitive areas. A focus on well-being should be integrated into all aspects of child welfare services. Particularly in the field of child abuse prevention, addressing child and family needs related to well-being is a critical part of reducing risks and increasing safety and protective factors. This section presents information on protective factors and child, youth, parent, and caregiver well-being. It also offers resources about marriage, fatherhood, and parenting, as well as building the capacity of programs and systems to promote well-being.

Raise Awareness and Create Supportive Communities. Public awareness can be part of an overall approach to preventing child abuse and neglect. Find resources and information on sharing a message and educating the public, making an economic case for prevention, and creating community support and partnerships to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Prevention Programs. Find standards for prevention programs, reports from State programs, and information on types of programs addressing the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Developing & Sustaining Prevention Programs. Find resources on developing a prevention program, conducting a community needs assessment, collaboration and partnerships, funding strategies, and making an economic case for prevention in your community or State.

AS INDIVIDUALS, WE CAN:

Remember the **Five R's**. Prevent Child Abuse America has developed the following “Five R's,” which can help individuals better understand the role they can play in child abuse prevention.

Raise the issue. Call or write your candidates and elected officials to educate them about issues in your community and the need for child abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment programs. Contact your local school district and faith community to encourage them to sponsor classes and support programs for new parents.

Reach out to kids and parents in your community. Anything you do to support kids and parents in your family and extended community helps to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. Be a good neighbor. Offer to baby-sit. Donate your children's used clothing, furniture, and toys for use by another family. Be kind and supportive, particularly to new parents and children.

Remember the risk factors. Child abuse and neglect occur in all segments of our society, but the risk factors are greater in families where parents: abuse alcohol or drugs; are isolated from their families or communities; have difficulty controlling their anger or stress; appear uninterested in the care, nourishment, or safety of their children; or seem to be having serious economic, housing, or personal problems.

Recognize the warning signs. Some of the warning signs that a child might be abused or neglected include: Nervousness around adults: aggression toward adults or other children; inability to stay awake or to concentrate for extended periods; sudden, dramatic changes in personality or activities; acting out sexually or showing interest in sex that is not appropriate for his or her age; frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries; low self-esteem; or poor hygiene. Report suspected abuse or neglect. If you suspect abuse or neglect is occurring, report it—and keep reporting it—until something is done.

Report suspected abuse or neglect. If you suspect abuse or neglect is occurring, report it—and keep reporting it—until something is done. ***Call the 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline at 800-25-ABUSE (800-252-2873) if you suspect that a child has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed by abuse or neglect. If you believe a child is in immediate danger of harm, call 911 first.***

The above information was taken from the following website: <https://www.childwelfare.gov>. For a copy of the publication, “What Everyone can do to Prevent Child Abuse, go to <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/2004guide.pdf>

***Blue and Silver Pinwheels,* the Symbol of Child Abuse Prevention.**

You will see blue and silver pinwheels around the City of Macomb this April. There will be pinwheel garden displays at Lincoln, Edison and St. Paul schools. The gardens will serve as a reminder that, as a community, we must work together to prevent child abuse. Pinwheels will also line the driveways into Macomb High School. They will be handed out at community events. Pinwheels are provided compliments of CASA of McDonough County.

April is
Volunteer Appreciation Month!

A special thank you CASA volunteers for your advocacy for abused and neglected children. Your duties as a CASA are sometimes difficult, however, you never let that stop you from being their voice in the juvenile court system. Thank you for all you do to assure your CASA children have a safe place to live where they can thrive and just be a kid.



April 3 – Flag Raising at Macomb City Hall. 12:15 p.m. The tradition of raising the Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention flag at Macomb City Hall continues. Mayor Inman will read a proclamation and the Honor Guard will raise the flag. The flag will continue to fly throughout the month of April to promote awareness of child abuse. **Please join us to show your support!** We will be handing out blue and silver pinwheels, the symbol of child abuse prevention.

Macomb Public Schools. “Kids Standing for Kids” Project. Pinwheel gardens will be located at Lincoln and Edison Schools. A 20-minute presentation designed especially for students will be offered for both junior and senior high students. Students will learn about child abuse, some staggering statistics, and even “famous” survivors of abuse. They will learn what to do if they, or a friend, are suffering from abuse. There will be a flag raising event and the Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention flag will fly for the month of April.

St. Paul School in Macomb Pinwheel Garden. Each student will be given a pinwheel to place in the ground in honor of children who suffer from abuse and neglect.

April 7 – Koins for Kids. “Koins” will be collected between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. at Farm King and HyVee. These funds help assure abused and neglected children in McDonough County have a CASA volunteer. Contact Vicki Duba at 309-44-0003 if you would like to help.

April 13 – Interagency Council presents, Trauma Informed Care. 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at WIU’s Horrabin Hall. (Table displays from 11:00 – 1:00. Speakers beginning at 1:00. To register and for more information visit wiu.edu/coehs/iac2018/ or call Pete Tarantola at 309-837-5437. The cost of this event is one perishable food item for the university food pantry.

April 14 – Run for CASA’S Kids! 8:00 AM, Old Dairy, 210 Lafayette Street, Macomb. Our 2nd Annual 5K run/walk with a 1-mile family and children’s walk. All proceeds go to CASA of McDonough County. For a paper/mail in registration form go to advonet.org. For on-line registration, go to <https://RunforCasasKids.itsyourrace.com/register/>

April 26 – Hands Around the Courthouse 12:00 noon at the McDonough County Courthouse in Macomb. This event is sponsored by WIRC. Everyone is invited to join together in a stand against abuse.

May 8 - Brown Bag Lunch at 12:00 noon. Erica Thurman, Juvenile Probation of McDonough County, will talk about the program, dual Juvenile Delinquent (JD) and Juvenile Abuse (JA) cases, how we can work together, and the challenges her program faces.

May 9 – Victims Compensation Program. 12:00 – 2:00 in Quincy. Hosted by Advocacy Network for Children. Details to follow.

Happy Birthday
Jan Greenwood
April 16th