



# CAC News

April 2010

**A publication of  
The Children's Advocacy  
Center of Sullivan County**

## April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

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### Mission Statement

*To combat child sexual and severe physical abuse by coordinating and providing services to children and families in crisis in a safe and caring environment.*

Each April, people across the country join forces to raise awareness of the terrible tragedy of child abuse and neglect and to promote specific ways to join the prevention movement. In fact, Child Abuse Prevention Month has been observed each April since its first presidential proclamation in 1985. Since that time, millions of Americans have participated each year in this crucial public awareness campaign. Although awareness of child abuse and neglect needs to be a year round commitment, concentrating our efforts in April serves to focus public attention on the positive solutions to a devastating problem. If everyone in the community takes a moment to prevent child abuse we can make a difference in the lives of children throughout the state of Tennessee.

Through a wide range of activities during April, the Children's Advocacy Center of Sullivan County, with other community groups, offer you an opportunity to join this movement. You can be among the Tennessee citizens working to remind everyone about the importance of children in our lives, and how we can all be a part of preventing child abuse and neglect.

For more information on how you can become involved, please call the Children's Advocacy Center at (423) 279-1222

### Did you Know?

**A report of child abuse is made every 10 seconds in the United States.**

**85-90% of child abuse cases involve perpetrators known to the child.**

**Almost 5 children die each day due to abuse.**

\* Prevent Child Abuse America

### The Blue Ribbon



The Blue Ribbon Child Abuse Prevention Campaign had its early beginnings following the death of a very young child. In spring 1989, Bonnie Finney, a Virginia grandmother, received the devastating news that her beloved grandson had died of injuries inflicted by his parents. In an expression of her grief and outrage, this grandmother did something that has given us a symbol, around which we rally for the cause of child abuse prevention. She tied a blue ribbon to the antenna of her van as a way to remember "the bruised and battered body of her grandson" and to alert her community to the tragedy of child abuse.

In Bonnie's own words: "The blue ribbon serves as a constant reminder to fight for protection of our children. Please wear a blue ribbon. Put one on your car. Give one to your friends. Tell them what it means. You may save a child's life!"

Just think what could happen if each one of us helped spread the word to a few of the people we come in contact with each day. Please help us with this important cause.

## Different Types of Child Abuse:

Child abuse and neglect occur when a child is mistreated or not provided with the basic necessities of life, resulting in injury or risk of harm.

There are four types of abuse:

**Physical abuse** is the non-accidental physical injury of a child, such as a severe beating, burns, bites, strangulation, and immersion in scalding water.

**Physical neglect** is the withholding of or failure to provide a child with the basic necessities of life; food, clothing, shelter, medical care, attention to hygiene, or supervision needed for optimal physical growth and development.

**Sexual abuse** is the exploitation of a child for the sexual gratification of an adult or significantly older child. It can include both physical and nonphysical contact.

**Emotional abuse** is a pattern of behavior that attacks a child's emotional development and sense of self-worth. Examples include constant criticism, in-

## WAYS TO HELP PREVENT CHILD ABUSE

- ♥ Be a nurturing parent– Children need to know that they are special, loved and capable of following their dreams;
- ♥ Help a friend, neighbor or relative– Being a parent isn't easy. Offer a helping hand, take care of the children so the parent (s) can rest or spend time together;
- ♥ Help yourself– When the big and little problems of your everyday life pile up and you feel overwhelmed and out of control, take time out. Don't take it out on your child;
- ♥ If your baby cries– It can be frustrating to hear your baby cry. Learn what to do if your baby won't stop crying. Never shake a baby, shaking a child may result in severe injury or death;
- ♥ Get involved– Ask your community leaders, clergy, library and schools to develop services to meet the needs of healthy children and families with your help;
- ♥ Promote programs in schools– Teaching children, parents and teachers prevention strategies can help to keep children safe;
- ♥ Monitor your children's television and video viewing– Watching violent films and TV programs can harm young children;
- ♥ Volunteer at a local child abuse prevention program such as the Children's Advocacy Center;
- ♥ Report suspected abuse or neglect– If you have reason to believe a child has been or may be harmed, call your local department of children and family services or your local police department.

\* In Tennessee everyone is a mandated reporter of child abuse

 **Department of Children's Services Hot Line**  
1-877-542-2873

### Tips for Kids

- ⊗ If anyone is hurting you, tell someone about it. Tell a parent, a teacher, a friend's parent or a neighbor. Don't be afraid to ask for help;
- ⊗ If something is happening in your family that hurts, it is okay to tell someone;
- ⊗ If the first person you tell doesn't believe you, keep telling until you find someone who does;
- ⊗ You are not alone, there's help out there for you;
- ⊗ You deserve to be treated as the valuable person you are;
- ⊗ If this happens to you, it is not your fault;
- ⊗ **REMEMBER; YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

### Safety Tips for Parents

- ◆ Network with your child's friends and their parents;
- ◆ Do not let your child spend time in an unsupervised home, and know who their friends are;
- ◆ If your child spends a lot of time at a neighbors home, find out why;
- ◆ Be alert to unexplained money or gifts. Find out who gave them to your child and why;
- ◆ Develop and maintain open communication with your children so you can talk about any subject comfortably.

# Highlights from 2009

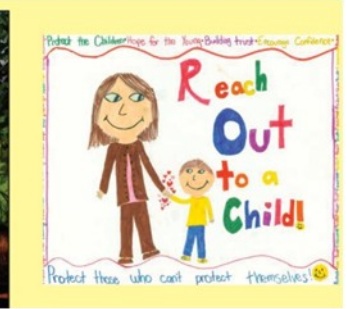


In April, the Forensic Interview Room was named in honor of Lt. Bobby Russell of the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office. Lt. Russell was recognized for his decade of dedicated service to the children of Sullivan County.



## Detective Aaron Blevins Receives Blue Ribbon Award

Each Spring, the Children's Advocacy Center honors an individual who works with or has volunteered on behalf of children. In 2009, Bristol Tennessee Police Department Detective Aaron Blevins was the recipient of the award to honor his contribution to the welfare of children.



## 2009 Annual T-Shirt Design Contest

Ashlyn Jackson, a student from George Washington Elementary in Kingsport was the 2009 winner of the CAC's annual T-Shirt design contest



## Blue Ribbon Tree at Blountville Middle School

In April, the Children's Advocacy Center of Sullivan County invites every school to take action for children. A "Blue Ribbon Tree" is made by placing student-made blue ribbons on a tree at area schools. The blue ribbon is the international sign for child abuse prevention and serves as a constant reminder that all of us have a responsibility to help keep children safe.



## CAC Labyrinth

Gena Frye, Executive director of the CAC dedicates a labyrinth that was built through the "Lowe's Heroes" program which provides materials and volunteers for worthy community projects. Employees from the Volunteer Parkway Lowe's in Bristol began the project in July and finished in December. The labyrinth will be used to help in the healing process for the children who are clients at the CAC.

**"Child abuse casts a shadow the length of a lifetime"**

## Listen to the Children

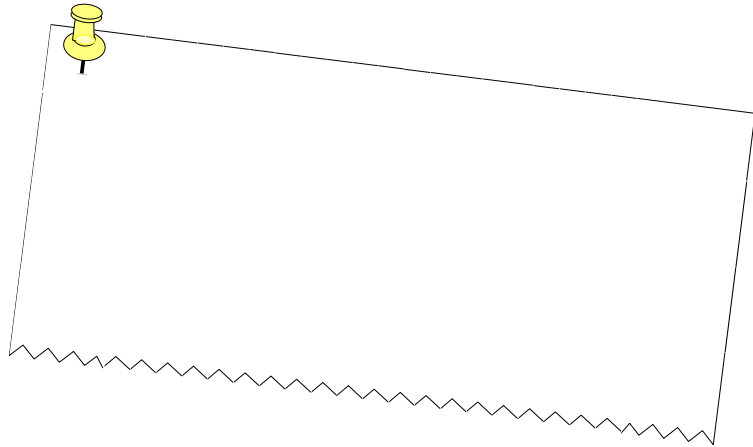
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### OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIVING

#### For the Children:

- \* New toys
- \* \$10.00 Gift cards
- \* New clothing
- \* Packaged snacks
- \* School supplies
- \* Boxed juices
- \* Bottled water
- \* Journals for both boys and girls
- \* Art supplies
- \* Playdoh
- \* Markers
- \* Paints
- \* Boy baby doll
- \* Girl baby doll
- \* Boys and girls cotton Underwear
- \* Washer and dryer for family
- \* Soap

#### For the Center:

- \* Volunteers
- \* Digital camera
- \* Office supplies

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

The CAC has several events coming up:

#### *April 9, 2010 – 9:30 a. m.*

- ♥ Proclamation Signing at the CAC
- ♥ Blue Ribbon Award to be presented to an individual who has made a difference in the lives of Sullivan County's children.

#### *April 13, 2010 – 8:30 a. m.*

- ♥ Children's Advocacy Council Quarterly Meeting

#### *May 22, 2010 - 10:00 a. m.*

- ♥ Motorcycle Ride fundraiser including BBQ dinner and bluegrass music

#### *June 7, 2010*

- ♥ Golf tournament, Ridgefields Country Club, Kingsport

### CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE

If you know or suspect that a child is being abused,  
please call the following toll-free numbers:

1-877-54A-BUSE

OR

1-877-237-0004

