

For Immediate Release

March 15, 2016

**April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Everyone Has a Role to Play**  
*Illinois DCFS to hold events in Springfield, Edwardsville, Chicago, more.*

(SPRINGFIELD, Ill) – The public is invited to join the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Prevent Child Abuse Illinois, other child welfare stakeholders, elected officials and more for a month long observance that is a public call to action during National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April.

“The impact of abuse and neglect on a child can take a lifetime to heal and that’s where we as a community can help,” said Illinois DCFS Director George H. Sheldon. “Not only do we need to intercede and find help for a family in crisis but we need to help prevent child abuse by building awareness that it can happen in any family. By getting involved, one person can positively impact a child’s life forever.”

Each year, it is estimated that thousands of cases of abuse go unreported. The impact of abuse on children manifests itself in many ways. Children may experience a range of emotional, psychological and physical problems and trauma as a result of being abused or neglected. Abused and neglected children are more likely to be self-destructive or aggressive, to abuse drugs and/or alcohol, or become young offenders.

During the month of April and throughout the year, Illinois DCFS would like to encourage communities to share child abuse and neglect prevention awareness messages and to help promote prevention efforts across the country.

To heighten awareness, Illinois DCFS will host events throughout the state to mark the occasion (see list below). All events are open to the public. For more information on the events and how you can help, the public can call the Illinois DCFS communications department: 312-814-6847.

Don’t miss Illinois DCFS *art exhibit* titled “Art from Youth in Care and From Others Who Care”. It will be on display and open to the public from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily beginning Monday, April 4-11 on the main level of the Thompson Center. The exhibit will feature art from children who are currently in care, or have been in care, and by artists who have been affected by child abuse. The art depicted often captures the hidden emotions a child is experiencing. It frequently reveals the individual’s true story of abuse or neglect. This event is presented by Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and Prevent Child Abuse Illinois.

**Upcoming Events:**

Date: Friday, April 1, 2016

What: **CHICAGO** Blue Bow Kickoff Event

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Where: Fourth Presbyterian Church (Michigan Ave. & Chestnut St.) 126 E. Chestnut St. in Chicago

Photo op and tying of blue bows to trees will take place at 9:50 a.m. outside.

Date: Friday, April 1, 2016

What: **Edwardsville** Kick-Off Event

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Where: Madison County Government Building, 157 N. Main Street in Edwardsville for a program, activities and more.

Date: Friday, April 1, 2016

What: **Carterville** Kick-Off Event

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Where: John A. Logan College, 700 Logan College Dr. (Main Entrance, Lower Level) in Carterville for a program, activities and more.

Date: Monday, April 4, through April 11, 2016

What: **CHICAGO** Art Exhibit. The artwork is created by those affected by child abuse and neglect.

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Where: Lobby of James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph Street in Chicago

Date: Wednesday, April 6, 2016

What: Famous **Peoria** Zoo Triebel Lions to don blue ribbons

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Where: Peoria Zoo 2320 N. Prospect Rd. in Peoria (zoo entrance). Open to the public

Date: Thursday, April 7, 2016

What: **Springfield** Press Conference, open to the public.

Time: 10:00 am

Where: State Capitol Rotunda, 401 S. Spring St. in Springfield

Date: Saturday, April 16, 2016

What: A panel of community leaders will discuss abuse, neglect, and its effects on Englewood children and families.

Time: Noon to 2:00 p.m.

Where: - 007 Police District (Community Room) 1438 W 63rd Street in Chicago

For a full calendar of related activities, visit this link: [Child Abuse Prevention Month Event Calendar](#)

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