



MEDIA CONTACT:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**THE XXX COUNTY *CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER*
RECOGNIZES CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH**

Your Town, MD (April 1, 2018) – XXXX, the child advocacy center of XXXX County, joins child advocates across the country each April to bring much needed attention to the issue of child abuse prevention.

This month a variety of community leaders partnered with XXX to promote its “Blue Ribbon - Make a Difference” campaign, which offers individuals and community groups an opportunity to make a difference for the children in XXXX County. XXX partners recognize that the best way to ensure the health and wellbeing of children, allowing them to grow into adults who prosper and contribute to society, is to focus on *preventing* child abuse. They believe that child abuse *can* be prevented and that residents are an important part of making that happen.

If you drive by XXX in XXX you will see the lawn covered in bright blue spinning pinwheels in observance of Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month. Each pinwheel represents a family served in 2017. “The pinwheel represents what childhood should be – carefree and innocent,” said XXX, director of XXX. If 230 families came to us for help last year, I wonder how many did not. This is our opportunity to focus on an issue that many people don’t like to talk about.”

Since children are much more likely to be hurt by someone who has regular access to them – such as a family member - XXX encouraged parents to, “Give appropriate names for body parts and start conversations early about what is off limits in regard to touching.” She also encourages parents to let children know they can talk to them about anything. “We really encourage those conversations,” XXX said. “The child needs to know the parent is always going to be there to listen.”

The XXX believes that everyone can play a role in ensuring healthy futures for our community's children, such as:

- Organize a support group for parents so they can talk over experiences or problems while their children play.
- Help out a friend or neighbor in need by offering to baby-sit so the parents can have a break.
- Be a good listener for the parents you come into contact with. Let them talk about their trials and triumphs.
- Informally mentoring a child or a new parent. Share what you’ve learned.
- In the workplace, support flex time so parents can deal with day-to-day situations and emergencies without added stress at work.
- Volunteer to help at-risk children and youth by becoming a foster parent, a Big Brother or Sister, or a CASA or a XXX volunteer.

- If you are a parent, don't hesitate to reach out for help – to neighbors, co-workers, doctors - if you feel like you need support or a break from the stress of parenting.
- Or, join the XXX Program to learn positive parenting skills; call XXX at XXXX.

XXX provides XXX County with a nationally-endorsed child advocacy model for responding to allegations of child abuse. Using a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach that includes both the public and private sectors, XXX brings key professionals together in a productive, neutral setting to work on behalf of the best interests of the child. For more information, visit us at www.xxxx.org or call 410-xxx-xxxx.

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