

For Immediate Release
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Contact: Heather Tarczan
Heather.Tarczan@illinois.gov
312-590-0875

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Illinois DCFS kicks off monthlong observance with events across the state

(CHICAGO) – Join the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Prevent Child Abuse Illinois, Hospital Sisters Health System, the Poshard Foundation for Abused Children, elected officials, child welfare stakeholders and more for a month-long observance to share child abuse and neglect prevention awareness messages and promote prevention efforts during Child Abuse Prevention Month in April.

This year's theme, **Building Together, Prevention in Partnership**, is a call to action to recognize that everyone in the community has a role to play in ensuring children grow up safe and loved; and families have the resources they need to thrive.

"Illinois DCFS, our private agency partners, social service providers in the community – and every Illinoisan – have a shared responsibility to do everything we can to ensure children grow up in safe and loving homes," said **Illinois DCFS Director Heidi E. Mueller**. "For DCFS that means responding quickly to protect children when we receive reports of abuse or neglect and partnering with families to support children safely at home whenever possible. In 2023, our child abuse and neglect hotline responded to more than 231,500 calls in 11 seconds or less, and we were able to support 4,089 families in preservation programs, allowing youth to remain safely at home. We ask all of you to please be a voice supporting strong families and safe kids in our communities."

"Child abuse and neglect prevention happens in partnership. We all have a role to play in creating positive experiences for children and connecting families with resources when they need them," said **Prevent Child Abuse Illinois Executive Director Tarra Winters**. "Children and families are the foundation of our communities and when they are safe, strong and supported, it benefits all of us."

To heighten awareness, Illinois DCFS will host events across the state in observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month. All Illinoisans can get involved and show their commitment to ending child abuse by wearing blue on April 5, posting pictures on social media, tagging [Illinois DCFS](#) in their posts and using the hashtags #GreatChildhoods and #GoBlueIllinois.

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Upcoming Events:

Carterville - Press conference

Monday, April 1

1 p.m.

John A. Logan College, Building H Atrium

700 Logan College Dr.

Carterville IL 62918

Watch the livestream: www.facebook.com/preventchildabuseillinois/

Springfield - Press conference and pinwheel planting

April 2

10 a.m.

HSHS St. John's Hospital Pavilion Lobby

301 N. 8th Street

Springfield IL 62769

Watch the livestream: www.facebook.com/preventchildabuseillinois/

Wood River - Press conference

Friday, April 5

10 a.m.

Riverbend Family Ministries

144 E. Ferguson Ave.

Wood River IL 62095

Watch the livestream: www.facebook.com/preventchildabuseillinois/

Aurora - Art exhibit

Monday, April 1 through Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Paramount School of the Arts

20 S. Stolp Ave., Aurora

The exhibit will feature artwork created by children who are currently in care or have been in care, students, local artists and individuals who care about children.

For a full calendar of Child Abuse Prevention Month awareness activities occurring statewide throughout the month of April, click [here](#).

To report suspected child abuse or neglect, visit the DCFS Online Reporting System at <https://childabuse.illinois.gov>. The online system is an easy way for anyone to report suspected child abuse or neglect using a computer or any mobile device. In an emergency, call the DCFS Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-25-ABUSE (800-252-2873). Calls and online reports may be made 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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About the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Founded in 1964, DCFS is responsible for protecting children from abuse or neglect by responding to reports received by the Child Abuse Hotline at childabuse.illinois.gov (non-emergency situations) or 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873). With the goal of keeping children safe, DCFS strengthens and supports families with a wide range of services. When keeping a child safe means removing them from the home, DCFS makes every effort to reunite them with their family. When the best interest of the child makes this impossible, DCFS is committed to pursuing guardianship or adoption by loving families to provide children with a safe and permanent home. DCFS is also responsible for licensing and monitoring of all Illinois child welfare agencies.

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