

You Can Help Prevent Child Abuse!

April is child abuse prevention month and there are many ways you, as a member of your community, can help reduce the incidents of child abuse. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services there were 906,000 cases of child abuse/neglect in the United States in 2003. Child abuse has a huge impact on children beyond the visible affects. It can affect a child's cognitive and behavioral development resulting in lasting affects throughout their lifetime. Therefore it is important for communities to help in the fight against child abuse and do what they can to prevent it.

Here are some easy, helpful ideas about how you can prevent child abuse in your family and community.

- Support parents who are struggling
- Be a friend to another parent or child you know
- Talk to your neighbors and look out for their children along with yours
- Give your used clothing, toys, and furniture to a family in need
- Volunteer your time to the community
- Talk to your children
- Most importantly let your children know you love them

Taking care of a child is not an easy task. Forming a support network with neighbors, friends, or family can serve many purposes. A parent can give and receive advice from other parents, form friendships, and make a difference in a child's life.

Ideas for preventing child abuse were obtained from *Prevent Child Abuse America*. For more information on child abuse and child abuse prevention refer to www.preventchildabuse.org. To report child abuse, contact your local human services agency.

Healthy Baby Coalition of Marquette and Waushara Counties