



It's  
**Y**our/**T**urn  
...to Raise the Leaders of Tomorrow

# Pinwheels for Prevention 2010

## Building a Family Friendly Community

### Speak-Out!

- **Your voice is needed to support laws and policies that strengthen families and keep children safe.**
- **Write a letter to the editor of your local paper.**
- **Send an e-mail to your elected officials.**
- **Learn about important decisions being made that impact your children, family and community.**
- **Reach out to families and kids.**
- **Contribute to programs that support children.**
- **Speak out in support of a family-friendly community and state.**

**T**he month of April is child abuse and neglect prevention month. This is a perfect time for your community to discuss what can be done to make sure that our children grow up healthy, safe and loved.

Child abuse and neglect is a symptom of a larger problem - the lack of resources and support for families in a community. To keep children safe, we have to fix the problem instead of only treating the symptom.

When the well-being of children and families becomes the priority of everyone in a community, the number of child abuse and neglect incidences will decrease. Other good things will also happen, including better health outcomes, improved school performance and family economic self-sufficiency.

It is important that every member of our community consider what they can do to improve our collective well-being. Whether it is volunteering, making donations, or advocating for family-friendly policies, everyone can take their turn in making a difference.

### Connecting with Kids Makes a Difference



A little time spent positively supporting kids can make a big difference for our community. Take a look at the facts:

- Youth who have positive mentors are more likely to stay in school and earn high grades and less likely to smoke, use drugs or carry a weapon. (*Public/Private Ventures*)
- Children who are read to at least three times a week start school ready to learn and are able to master reading and language skills more quickly. (*Early Childhood Longitudinal Study*)
- An adult's attitude is key to a child's successful learning. A recent study shows that when adults approach children in a spirit of equal partnership and respect, the child learns more quickly, is more involved in learning and is more creative about problem solving. (*National Teacher Research Panel*)
- Youth who have positive family role models and good family communication are 2.5 times less likely to use alcohol than youth without these assets. (*Oman, Vesely, et.al.*)
- Singing, talking and playing with young children assists with healthy brain development and has a positive impact on their future learning and career success. (*Carnegie Foundation*)
- Kids who regularly eat dinner with their family are healthier, better adjusted emotionally and have higher self-esteem. (*Nemours Health and Prevention Services*)

# Ways to Show Kids You Care

**It just takes one caring person to help a child grow up healthy, safe and loved.**

- Notice them.
- Ask them about themselves.
- Cheer their accomplishments.
- Introduce them to new experiences.
- Expect their best, do not expect perfection.
- Praise them for doing something right.
- Laugh at their jokes.
- Create a safe environment.
- Make decisions together.
- Build something together.
- Inspire their creativity.
- Invite them over for juice.
- Listen to their favorite music with them.
- Love them, no matter what.

*Excerpted from Roehlkepartain, Jolene. 150 Ways to Show Kids You Care. Search Institute (Minneapolis, MN) copyright 1998. [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)*

# Family-Friendly Communities

**Here is what some Ohio communities are doing to strengthen families and keep children safe.**

- Community baby showers provide expectant mothers with an opportunity to receive helpful advice, useful baby items and connect with other moms-to-be for emotional support.
- Churches provide congregations with information about child development and the importance of reaching out to youth in the community.
- Parenting classes provide parents and other family members the opportunity to learn more about child development and share good ideas for supporting and nurturing the children in their lives.
- Youth leadership programs inspire young people to think about the difference they can make in their community.



**Ohio Children's Trust Fund**  
[www.jfs.ohio.gov/octf](http://www.jfs.ohio.gov/octf)

**For more information  
about Child Abuse  
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