

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

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THE BLUE RIBBON CAMPAIGN: BUILDING BETTER FUTURES FOR SOLANO'S CHILDREN

In 2005, 4,126 children in Solano County were reported abused or neglected to Child Protective Services. In an effort to protect the health and well-being of young children in Solano County, the Children's Network and the Child Abuse Prevention Council will join other community partners to sponsor and support public awareness and education with the Blue Ribbon Campaign in the month of April.

Since 2001, the Blue Ribbon Campaign in Solano County has been led by the Child Abuse Prevention Council and AmeriCorps, and features a series of county-wide events that focus on parent education and community awareness. The events this year include a "What Keeps Me Safe and Healthy" kids' art activity in each city, blue ribbon tying events, city presentations, and proclamations recognizing April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

To further promote awareness of children's issues during the month of April, and in keeping with the spirit of community collaboration that earned Solano County the title of one of the "100 Best Communities for Youth" by America's Promise, all public education and community events will be sponsored and supported under the unified theme of *Solano County: A Community United for Building Better Futures*. Families, parents, and community members are encouraged to participate to learn more about community supports for young children.

During the month of April, hundreds of communities across the United States will

come together at candle-lighting ceremonies to honor the promise of remembering the plight of America's abused, abandoned and neglected children. On April 13, CASA Light of Hope and the Child Abuse Prevention Council invite our community to gather at the Solano County Administration building at 5:00 p.m. to form the word HOPE in candlelight. Other local events and activities include Vallejo's "Fighting Back Against Child Abuse" on April 8, Vacaville's Blue Ribbon Tying on April 11 followed by a "Spank Out Day" on April 30, Dixon's Block Party on April 22, Fairfield/Suisun's Light of Hope/Blue Ribbon Event on April 13, Rio Vista's 2nd Annual "Walk for Safety" on April 20, and Benicia's "Cherish the Child" Event on April 23.

Local service providers and community organizations working in conjunction with the Children's Network, Child Abuse Prevention Council, Child Care Planning Council, AmeriCorps and the Family Resource Centers include: Solano Family and Children's Services, First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission, Solano Office of Family Violence Prevention, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Travis Air Force Base and others.

For a complete calendar of Blue Ribbon Campaign events and related activities, please refer to the April Events list on page 3. For further information, please contact Maria Cedeño or Rosemary Kennedy at the Children's Network (707) 421-7229.

ELECTION '06: SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION

As the June 6th election approaches, we'd like to remind the voters of Solano County to consider two ballot items that will directly affect education throughout our area and the state:

Proposition 82 - Preschool for All

Children's advocate Rob Reiner and a broad-based coalition of business, labor and education leaders filed Proposition 82 for the June 2006 ballot aiming to provide a high-quality, voluntary preschool education for every four-year old in California. The Act funds part-day, part-year preschool services through a 1.7% additional tax on taxable income over \$800,000 for couples filing jointly and over \$400,000 for individuals.

If passed, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction would provide oversight at the state level. Local administration would occur through the County Office of Education. County offices would contract with local providers who meet certain educational standards (i.e. public schools, classroom-based charter schools, for-profit and non-profit providers, and family child care homes), to deliver preschool services. All teachers providing Preschool for All services must have a Bachelor's degree with 24 units of early childhood education by 2014. To read more about Proposition 82, visit the Secretary of State's website: http://www.s.s.c.a.gov/elections/elections_j.htm#2006Primary.

Proposition 49 – After School Programs

In 2002, California voters approved Proposition 49, the After School Education and Safety Program Act sponsored by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, which would increase funding for after school programs. In order for the program to take effect, the state would first need to realize a pre-determined in-

crease in revenues. To date, those revenues have not met the "trigger" level, and the program has never been implemented. The Governor's proposed 2006-2007 State Budget included additional funds to trigger Proposition 49, increasing funding from \$121 million to \$550 million.

The Legislative Analyst's Office, an independent body that examines the state budget, suggested placing before the voters a repeal of Proposition 49 because the law is currently designed to launch the program automatically once revenue levels are met. The LAO is questioning this type of "autopilot spending" for several reasons, including the fact that certain basic education needs are currently not being met, funding district-based education programs should be a priority over after school programs, and because existing state and federal after school funds remain unused.

The LAO's request was partially met when Senate Constitutional Amendment (SCA) 24, authored by Senator Torlakson, was introduced to the legislature. SCA 24

places a measure on the June ballot that would postpone Proposition 49 until two conditions are met. First, that the general education budget is fully funded, and secondly that California's chronic budget deficit is wiped out. In addition, Senator Tom Torlakson proposed additional legislation to delay implementation of Proposition 49 (SCA 12), but has decided not to bring it to the voters in June.

Meanwhile, the Governor continues to promote the expansion of after school programs. On March 15, 2006, he co-hosted the California After School Summit along with the Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Office of the Secretary of Education. The Summit aimed to help superintendents, principals and after school providers learn more about the opportunities and requirements of Proposition 49.

Online Resources for Voters:

For more information on these and other ballot items, visit www.easyvoter.org to obtain the *Easy Voter Guide*, a nonpartisan guide for voters.

To register to vote online, visit <https://ovr.ss.ca.gov/votereg/OnlineVoterReg>

CHILDREN'S NETWORK DATA SYSTEM RECOGNIZED IN STATEWIDE STUDY

In July 2005, The Foundation Consortium for California's Children and Youth convened a group of child welfare services community partnership stakeholders to develop criteria for evaluating data systems used by Family Support Services in the implementation of Differential Response for Child Welfare System Redesign. Differential Response is intended to assure that all families, whether or not a child abuse or neglect case, get connected to the services they need. Developing data systems to track these services and outcomes is critical to determine if Differential Response is having an impact and how much it costs.

A total of sixteen different data systems and vendors were assessed based on their ability to manage client data, service data, cost/finance data, and outcomes measurements and reports. The *ChildNet Results Manager* was among three systems which best met or exceeded the criteria expectations in all areas.

The *ChildNet Results Manager* was developed by Information Technology staff at the Children's Network in collaboration with the Family Resource Center (FRC) Network to track the families served by the FRCs, including demographics, referrals, services, funding and billing information, and outcomes for families.

As of December 31, 2005, a total of 14,014 families, including 19,947 children (receiving 50,145 units of service), have been tracked with the *ChildNet Results Manager*. Outcomes for families are tracked with the Family Development Matrix which is embedded in the *ChildNet Results Manager*. Jerry Endres, of the Institute for Collaborative Studies at California State University Monterey Bay, originally developed the Matrix and consulted on its modification for Solano County's FRC Network. He explains, "It helps to measure family progress and outcomes by quantifying the qualitative."

For individual families, the Matrix is a case management tool. When data are aggregated across agencies and programs, a broader picture emerges which can be used to assist families in a more efficient manner. More than 230 families have used the Matrix in one or more of 13 domains. For families who began in crisis, 78% report an improvement in conflict resolution skills, 64% report an improvement in family communication, 70% report increased family support, 92% report an improvement in access to health resource, and 74% report an increase in income.

To view the full online report on how Solano's own ChildNet Results Manager has been recognized in California as a best practice data management model for Differential Response, go online to: www.foundationconsortium.org/pdf/FRCdata_system_report1105.pdf.

April Event Calendar:

Child Abuse Prevention BLUE RIBBON EVENTS

April 4

Information distribution at local schools in Vacaville

April 7—14

Presentations to incarcerated parents at Solano County Jail

April 8

Fighting Back Against Child Abuse at JFK Library in Vallejo
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

April 11

Blue Ribbon Campaign in front of Vacaville City Hall at noon

April 20

Rio Vista's 2nd Annual Walk for Safety Event, *Save a Child*, begins at 4:30 p.m. at D. H. White Elementary School

April 22

Annual Block Party at Dixon's Library Park from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

April 23

Cherish the Child at Benicia's Senior Center from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

April 29

Month of the Military Child at Travis Elementary School from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

April 30

Vacaville's National "Spank Out Day"

Related Events

April 2—8

Solano County's "Week of the Child"

April 7

2006 Kids Day at the Capitol

April 13

Children's Light of Hope/Blue Ribbon Campaign ceremony at the Solano County Administration Building at 5:00 p.m.

April 25

Solano Family and Children's Services workshop on preventing child abuse and neglect with infants and toddlers from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Children's Network

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(formerly known as The Children's Network Council)

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