

THE BLUE RIBBON CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Each year, hundreds of thousands of blue ribbons are distributed by organizations that are interested in supporting families and preventing child abuse and neglect. The blue ribbon is a positive symbol of the need to do one's best when it comes to children and families. The campaign has four aspects:

Be a Blue Ribbon Family

Spend time together: Find activities that everyone can enjoy. Have fun, laugh together and create good memories for the future. Talk about the positive things that happen and praise family members when they do something good.

Respect one another: Be aware of each other's feelings and think before you speak. Solve problems together peacefully. Be a model for the values you believe in and the behavior you expect.

Create family traditions: Elaborate or simple, family rituals help everyone feel connected. Talk with and listen to each other. Hold regular family meetings to share your thoughts and concerns.

Be a Blue Ribbon Parent

Show your children that you love them: Letting your children know that you love and respect them gives them a sense of security, belonging and support. Catch them being good and give them lots of praise. Tell them you love them, even if they say they're "too big."

Really listen: Give your children your undivided attention when they are trying to communicate with you. Put yourself in your children's place and try to understand their point of view.

Spend time with your children: Find some special time for each of your children. Discuss their schoolwork and participate in school activities. Play with them, talk to them, read to them, create family events in which everyone can participate.

Be a Blue Ribbon Kid

Be kind to everyone: Treat others the way you would like to be treated. Cheer up a friend who is sad or lonely. Play with new kids at school so they can make some friends. Share your stuff with others and try to do something nice for a parent every day.

Solve problems with brainpower, not hurtful words, fists or weapons: Learn to think things through before you act. Don't let a group pressure you into doing something you know is wrong. Sometimes talking to a parent or other trusted adult can help.

Help others: Find opportunities to volunteer. Some charities need people to collect food, clothing or money for those less fortunate – so look out for ways to help.

Make Yours a Blue Ribbon Community

Help parents you know: Offer to baby-sit so parents have some quality time away from the children. Let them know that parenting is a difficult job and that we all need help and support sometimes. Encourage anyone you think is having problems to get help.

Learn about ways to prevent child abuse and neglect: Encourage clubs or religious organizations to provide child care or transportation so that parents can participate in activities (especially single parents). Support the addition of parenting education into corporate wellness programs.

Volunteer to help a child or a family: Lend your time, skills, resources or money to help groups that prevent child abuse and family violence. Be a mentor to a child who needs to have contact with a caring adult.



1-800-CHILDREN