



You're Invited! Blue Ribbon Kick-Off Ceremony

On Wednesday, March 27, 2019, Orange County's Child Abuse Prevention Council, convened by The Raise Foundation and supported by the participation of their many community partners, will host the 25th Annual Blue Ribbon Kick-Off Ceremony at Bowers Museum in Santa Ana from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The event is free of charge and will serve as the official launch for a month-long "Keep Kids Safe, Healthy, and Happy" awareness campaign for April National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Michele Gile, news reporter for CBS2 and KCAL9, will emcee the event, which is open to the public and is expected to draw more than 100 people including parents, educators and members of law enforcement, civic and service groups, nonprofits and the business community.

The ceremony will also include several speakers, the unveiling of the winning entries in the Blue Ribbon Youth Art Contest, awarding the honorees receiving the Blue Ribbon and Shining Light Awards and a tribute in memory of the nine local children who died last year from abuse and neglect. Talented student artists representing Orange County School of the Arts group, MONTAGE!, will perform at the event.

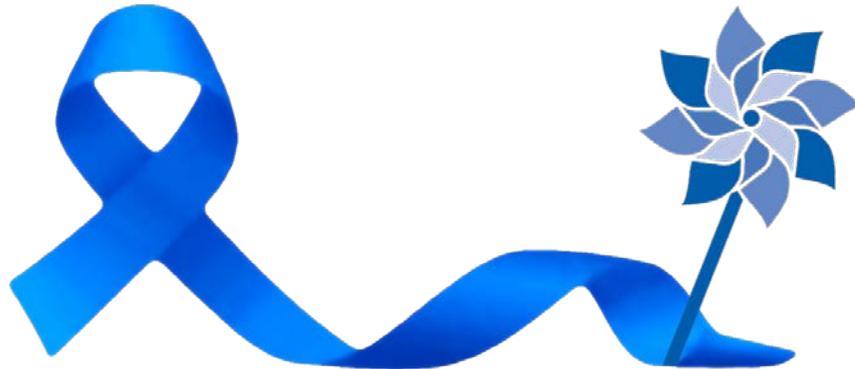
Those in attendance will then plant and dedicate a large Pinwheels for Prevention® garden across the street from the museum in support of all children. The garden is designed not only to draw positive attention to the topic of keeping children safe, but also to motivate the public to get involved. Every April, pinwheel gardens are created to raise awareness during National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

"Sadly, child abuse and neglect—which is almost always preventable—occurs throughout Orange County, regardless of the city, social or economic status," shares Eldon Baber, executive director of The Raise Foundation. "By educating the community about warning signs, the impact of child abuse and most importantly how we can each help, we give all children a better chance to experience a safe, healthy and happy childhood."

Early intervention is key, which is why all are asked to call the Child Abuse Registry Hotline (714) 940-1000 should they suspect child abuse or neglect. According to the 2018 Community Indicators Report for Orange County, calls to the hotline increased nine percent from 2008 to

2017. Some experts believe this is the result of a more informed community knowing what to look for and how to respond.

To RSVP for the Kick-Off Ceremony, please visit www.ocblueribbonkickoff.eventbrite.com. To learn more about Blue Ribbon Month and how to get involved, please call The Raise Foundation at (714) 884-3421, ext. 104 or visit www.theraisefoundation.org.



The Reason for Blue Ribbons and Pinwheel Gardens

Child Abuse Prevention Month is also referred to as Blue Ribbon Month, and here in Orange County you'll start noticing nearly 2,000 pinwheels being used in 80 Pinwheels for Prevention® gardens popping up in front of schools, nonprofits, businesses, fire and police departments, libraries and museums, and many other places. The front row of each garden will be "planted" in memory of the 9 local children who sadly died last year from child abuse and neglect. The remainder of the pinwheel garden supports and honors of all children in our county who deserve to be safe, healthy, and happy.

The Blue Ribbon campaign began in 1989 after Bonnie Finney, a grandmother in Virginia, suffered the loss of her grandchild as a result of child abuse. Bonnie decided to tie a blue ribbon on her van's antenna to spark curiosity and create an opportunity for conversation with others. She chose the color blue to symbolize the bruises she saw on her grandchildren, and she pledged to never forget the sight of them. She said, "The Blue Ribbon serves as a constant reminder to fight for our children. Please show your support by wearing a Blue Ribbon, putting one on your car and/or giving one to your friends and family and tell them what it means. You could be saving a child's life."

Started in 2008 by Prevent Child Abuse America, the blue pinwheel became the new national symbol for child abuse prevention. It is reminiscent of playful childlike attitudes, and has become the "physical embodiment" of the great childhoods we want for all children. When you walk or drive by one of the Pinwheels for Prevention® gardens, please have it serve as a reminder to do all you can to "Keep Kids Safe, Healthy, and Happy!"

A special thank you to all the organizations and agencies who are volunteering to plant pinwheel gardens this year as part of Orange County's Child Abuse Prevention Month. To see a list of locations, please visit www.theraisefoundation.org.

If you are interested in planting one in front of your building, please contact The Raise Foundation at info@theraisefoundation.org.



Children Inspire Through Art

Who better to remind us to keep them safe, healthy and happy, but children themselves?

Recently, the Blue Ribbon Committee judged over 130 colorful pieces of artwork, all created with the theme "Keep Me Safe, Healthy, and Happy!" in mind. Entries were submitted by children between the ages of six and eighteen from schools and nonprofits all across Orange County as part of the Annual Blue Ribbon Youth Art Contest. Their colorful artwork featured parents depicted as super heroes, outdoor fun, healthy food choices, and lots of smiling children.

The winning entries will be unveiled at the 25th Annual Blue Ribbon Kick-Off Ceremony and the winning artists will be recognized in their classrooms and cities throughout the rest of spring. More than 30 of the entries will also be featured in a roaming art exhibit over the next year leading up to Child Abuse Prevention Month in 2020.

If you would like to host an exhibit of the top entries or a larger portion of the collection, please contact The Raise Foundation at info@theraisefoundation.org.



Key Initiatives for 2019

Orange County's Child Abuse Prevention Council has identified the following as key initiatives to promote during the 2019 awareness campaign:

- Toxic Stress/Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Mental Health
- Need for Resource Families (to foster children)

Other ongoing areas of focus include Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC), Water Safety, Car Safety (Kaitlyn's Law), Teen Suicide, Financial Literacy, Safe Sleeping and Safe Surrender. Many of these initiatives will be addressed during the Child Abuse Prevention Month Kick-Off Ceremony on March 27, 2019.

Nearly all child abuse and neglect is preventable. We encourage the community to learn more about each of these issues to better understand how we can all help children thrive.

At the core of the Child Abuse Prevention Month awareness campaign is a commitment to educate the community on trends in child abuse and neglect as well as prevention strategies. Useful information will be included in the Community Awareness Kit, posted online, and shared with the help of Raise Awareness Ambassadors. These volunteers will deliver presentations and facilitate information booths around the community for various groups, service clubs, parent organizations and businesses throughout April and beyond.

If you would like to schedule a presentation, please email Community Relations Specialist Keri Gee Semmelman at kerigee@theraisefoundation.org.

Blue Ribbon Honorees

The Child Abuse Prevention Council is pleased to announce the honorees of the Blue Ribbon and Shining Light Awards to individuals and groups for their work in child abuse prevention and the advocacy of children. Honorees will be recognized as part of the 25th Annual Child Abuse Prevention Month Kick-Off Ceremony. Recipients include local doctors, members of the California National Guard, law enforcement, educators and business professionals. Each of the honorees has gone above and beyond to advocate for children's safety and each shares a common goal to strengthen families today and for future generations to come.

2019 Blue Ribbon Honorees include:

- Dr. Daphne Wong from Children's Hospital of Orange County
- Orange County Kaiser Permanente's Southern California Family Violence Prevention and Child Abuse Prevention Programs under the leadership of Dr. Liza Eshilian-Oates, Dr. Connie Lin Yao and Dr. Altaf Kazi.

2019 Shining Light Award Honorees include:

- Businessman Jason Starkman of State Farm Insurance
- Ocean View School District's Social Emotional Learning Continuum
- Garden Grove Police Department's School Resource Officers
- The National Guard's Sunburst Youth ChalleNGe Academy
- The Orange County Sheriff Department's Special Victims Detail and School Mobile Assessment Resource Team



The Blue Ribbon Pledge

“We believe that all children deserve freedom from verbal abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional, psychological and physical abuse and neglect. We believe all children deserve to have Blue Ribbon Days, including loving hugs, nurturing homes, tender care, parents and adults who listen, promote self-esteem, give quality time, and provide adequate food, shelter, clothing and medical attention.”

Upcoming Trainings

“The Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences on Health and Well-being” trainings will be offered by Dr. Holly Magaña, in collaboration with HOAG Hospital - Newport Beach, on the following dates:

- Wednesday, April 10, 2019, from noon - 4:30 p.m.
- Thursday, April 11, 2019, from 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 16, 2019, from noon - 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 23, 2019, from 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

The goal of the training is to help develop a deep understanding of the ways in which early trauma and adversity impact health and well-being and to help develop a sustainable plan for taking care of yourself while caring for others.

Free continuing education units (CEUs) will be offered for social workers and nurses, and lunch will be provided.

Please contact Program Director Gary Taylor at gary@theraisefoundation.org if interested in attending.

Volunteer Opportunity: Community Awareness Kit Creation Day

Saturday, March 16, 2019 from 10 a.m. - noon

Come help create community awareness kits at The Raise Foundation in anticipation of Blue Ribbon Month! Kits will be distributed during the Blue Ribbon Kick-Off Event on March 27, 2019 and will include parenting tips, pamphlets and fliers on key initiatives, posters, blue ribbons, pinwheels and a “30 Days, 30 Ways” calendar of festive and fun activities for families and the community to enjoy.

A special thank you to the members of The Raise Foundation’s Young Professionals Board who have already signed up!

If you are interested in helping, please email Program Director Gary Taylor at gary@theraisefoundation.org.