

# Blue Ribbons for Kids

Child Abuse Prevention Month  
April 2012  
Community Participation



## What is the Blue Ribbon Campaign for Child Abuse Prevention Month?

April is recognized nationwide as Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Blue Ribbon Campaign is a comprehensive community wide effort in Crystal Lake and other surrounding cities in the McHenry County area led by **It's Our Little Secret**, a registered 501(c) 3 and supported by a range of individuals and community partners. This campaign will not only encourage the region to understand the problems of child abuse, but will also guide efforts in what we can do to help. Activities planned for April include awareness, prevention, education, and fund-raising.

## What can schools do to help?

Schools have a number of ways to help!

- ⌘ Create a Blue Ribbon Tree to spread awareness about child abuse prevention.
- ⌘ Encourage classrooms and entire school to participate in a Penny Drive collection. (Classroom winner will receive an ice cream party hosted by IOLS and a Blue Ribbons for Kids T-shirt)
- ⌘ Hand out Special Things to do with your Child each day Calendar, bookmarks, and awareness packets.
- ⌘ Have students participate in our Children's Art Poster Contest (elementary grades 2-5)
- ⌘ Have students participate in our Stamp Out Child Abuse Contest (grades 6-12) Winning drawing will be in the running to become the official Child Abuse Prevention Stamp through the United States Postal Service
- ⌘ Teachers and staff wear a blue ribbon pin during the entire month of April. (Students optional wristbands)
- ⌘ Ask us for information or training on resisting, recognizing and reporting child abuse

## Child Abuse Prevention Month Community-Wide Activities

**Blue Ribbon 5K Race and Family Fun Walk** - IOLS will host its first ever 5K run/walk on Saturday, April 23rd, traveling through the Talamore Subdivision in Huntley. Serious runners as well as walkers will enjoy an intermediate level course with all proceeds benefiting child abuse education, prevention and treatment services. Families, individuals and teams are encouraged to participate.

**Children's Art Contest** - Children in grades 2 thru 5 are invited to participate in this annual contest, where student artists develop a poster and slogan related to child abuse prevention. The winning poster is displayed on 2012 Blue Ribbon Campaign posters/brochures and on our website [www.itsourlittlesecret.org](http://www.itsourlittlesecret.org). In our local community centers and libraries. The winning entry will receive a gift certificate for art supplies or a pizza party for school classroom.

**Blue Ribbon Tree** – Build your own Blue Ribbon Tree to serve as a visual reminder that all of us have a responsibility to keep children safe. Create a tree inside with ribbons and student decorations or hanging blue ribbons on a live tree outside. Tree displays will be shown in the local media and on our website.

**Blue Ribbon Awareness Campaign** - The blue ribbon is the international sign of child abuse prevention. Started by a grandmother in Virginia who lost her grandson to the tragedy of child abuse, the blue ribbon signifies the color of the bruises on her young grandson, and is a call to action. Community members can purchase a blue ribbons or wristbands through local businesses (Please visit our website listed below for locations in your community).

**Blue Sunday** - Local churches are asked to join together in a day of prayer for victims and families affected by abuse. A special informational bulletin insert is available for distribution to area congregations, which identifies the signs and symptoms of child abuse and includes a special prayer.

**Family Movie Night** – Local theatres are asked to host a special day in the month of April with a discounted movie night or matinee showing a family themed movie.

**Family Bowl Day** – Local bowling alleys are asked to host a special day in the month of April for a discounted family-bowling outing.

**Business Participation** - Local companies, businesses and area restaurants are invited to place a coin collection container at their establishment or display a static window cling to show their support child abuse prevention and awareness.

**For more information, contact:**

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It's Our Little Secret, registered 501(c) 3

Phone: 815 341-0451 or visit our website at

[www.itsourlittlesecret.org](http://www.itsourlittlesecret.org)



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## **Tips for a Successful Penny Drive**

- ⌘ Get all students and coworkers involved!
- ⌘ Make flyers, put a blurb in your school paper or office memo, mention it at pep rallies or assemblies, and post information on electronic bulletin boards.
- ⌘ Refer to the contest with creative slogans. You can use the theme Make Some Change, Take Some Action or come up with your own creative slogan.
- ⌘ Challenge one grade to collect more than another grade or have the students challenge the teachers. Keep a daily record of the amounts raised and who is ahead. IOLS will supply the coin collection boxes.
- ⌘ Challenge a rival school or sporting teams and collect the coins at a school competition.
- ⌘ Incorporate counting coins or identifying money into your daily math studies for elementary ages.
- ⌘ Let junior high or high school students participate in a special themed day by making a donation to Blue Ribbon Campaign: no uniforms, flip flops day, crazy hat day, wear pajamas to school.
- ⌘ Challenge the Parent Teacher Association to do a matched contribution of the amount the students raise.
- ⌘ Remember why the Penny Drive is being done. This is not just a collection. This is part of a broader effort to help prevent and treat child abuse.
- ⌘ Reward the children for their efforts and collections. Consider a casual dress day, extra recess time, movie day, or a pizza lunch for the winners.
- ⌘ Work with IOLS to let local media outlets know of the children's volunteer support to prevent child abuse. Take lots of photographs!
- ⌘ Thank the children for their hard work!

### **For more information, contact:**

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