

**April 26, 2009 is
National Blue Sunday**

**Today, our congregation joins
churches across the nation for
BLUE SUNDAY**

What is Blue Sunday?

Blue Sunday is an awareness event focusing on the prevention of child abuse and neglect. It is a time for focused prayer for the victims of child abuse and those that rescue them.

Blue is the accepted 'memorial ribbon' color for honoring the victims of child abuse. The blue ribbons you see displayed today are to remind you that child abuse and neglect is an issue in our own community.

Blue Sunday Prayer & Challenge

Lord, thank You for our children,
For them we kneel and pray.

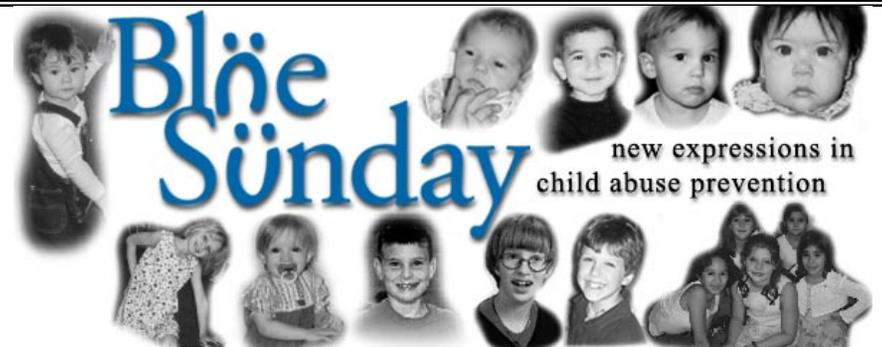
Help us teach them of Your kindness,
Of Your mercy and Your way.

Help us show them of Your love,
Your strength and safety, too.

Help us show them who You are,
Help us treat them like You do.



***Children are helpless, but WE are not.
Together we can make a difference.***



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In the United States . . .

(the latest statistics available from Childhelp)

While 3 million reports of child abuse are made every year in the U.S., experts estimate that the actual number of incidents of abuse and neglect is 3 times greater than reported.

A report of child abuse is made every 10 seconds

Child abuse occurs at every socio-economic level, across ethnic and cultural lines, within all religions and all levels of education.

One-third of abused and neglected children will later abuse their own children, continuing the horrible cycle of abuse.

1,500 children die every year from child abuse and neglect, just over four fatalities everyday. 79% of the children killed are younger than 4.

An estimated 906,000 children are victims of abuse and neglect every year. The rate of victimization is 12.3 children per 1,000 children.

The Five R's of Prevention

Remember the Risk Factors:

Risk factors are greater for parents with:

- Economic, housing or personal problems
- Isolation from their families or communities
- Difficulty controlling anger or stress
- Physical or mental health issues
- A painful childhood themselves
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Unrealistic expectations or are inexperienced with children

- Frequent/unexplained bruises or injuries
- Poor hygiene or dress that is inappropriate for the weather

Report Suspected Abuse or Neglect:

Call 1-800-392-3738 This is a 24-hour toll-free telephone line for reporting suspected child abuse in Missouri.

Raise the Issue:

By educating yourself and others you can help your community prevent child abuse and neglect from happening in the first place.

Reach Out:

Anything you do to support kids and parents can help reduce the stress that often leads to abuse and neglect.

- Be a friend to a parent or child you know. Get to know your neighbors.
- Donate or lend used clothing, furniture or toys.
- Volunteer your time and money for programs in your church and community that support children and families.

Recognize the Warning Signs:

A child's behavior may signal abuse or neglect long before any change in physical appearance. Some of the signs may include:

- Nervous around adults,
- aggression toward adults/other children
- Inability to stay awake or to concentrate for extended periods
- Sudden, dramatic changes in personality or activities
- Knowledge about sex that is unusual for the child's stage of development



Project Sunlight
Creating a Brighter Tomorrow



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