The Blue Ribbon Campaign

The blue ribbon is a positive symbol of the investment every adult and every Virginia community can make to strengthen families and insure that children grow up safe and healthy.

History of the Blue Ribbon

A Virginia grandmother named Bonnie Finney began the Blue Ribbon Campaign in the spring of 1989, as a memorial for her 3-year-old grandson, who was murdered by his mother's boyfriend. She tied a ribbon on her van and encouraged her friends to do the same. The spirit of the blue ribbon grew, and by the following year, it had become the symbol for child abuse prevention in the state of Virginia. Today, numerous organizations around the nation continue to use the blue ribbon as a reminder of the victims of child maltreatment and of the positive steps that can be taken to prevent child abuse and neglect.

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. • • •

We proudly wear or display this Blue Ribbon as a symbol of our determination to work towards a Blue Ribbon future for all of our children.

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1-800-552-7096 Virginia Child Abuse Hotline (language line available)
800-CHILDREN (800-244-5373) Parent Helpline

The Blue Ribbon Campaign to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

The Blue Ribbon Campaign has four parts:

Be a Blue Ribbon Family

Spend Time Together. Find activities everyone can enjoy. Share positive experiences and praise family members when they do something good. Create elaborate or simple family traditions to help everyone feel connected.

Respect One Another. Be aware of each other's feelings and think before you speak. Solve problems together peacefully. Model your values and behavior you expect.

Be a Blue Ribbon Parent

Show, and Tell, Your Children You Love Them. When your children know you love them, they gain a sense of security and belonging. "Catch them" being good and praise them. Spend time alone with each child, discussing their schoolwork, hobbies and goals.

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

Be a Blue Ribbon Kid

Be Kind. 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 to make them comfortable. Share with others and try to do something nice for a parent every day.

Solve Problems Wisely. Use your brainpower instead of hurtful words, fists or weapons. Learn to think things through before you act. Don't let anyone pressure you into doing something you know is wrong. Sometimes talking to a trusted adult can help.

Make Yours a Blue Ribbon Community

Help Parents and Children You Know. Offer to babysit and give parents some quality time to themselves. Be supportive if they have questions about how to handle a parenting issue, and encourage anyone you think is struggling to get help from their family or church, through resources available in their community, or by calling (800) CHILDREN (800-244-5373). Participate in a formal youth mentoring program, or simply be alert and extend yourself to children in your family, neighborhood or church who may need some extra encouragement.

Advocate for Children and Families. Give your time, skills and resources to groups that prevent child abuse and family violence. Encourage community, civic and religious organizations to offer programs and other support for children and families. Champion the inclusion of parenting education information and workshops into corporate wellness programs.

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