



# Riverbend Family Ministries Kicks Off Child Abuse Prevention Month; Is Presenting Sponsor at 2nd Annual Kids Health, Safety & Activity Fair

April 4 2013 8:55 AM



**Riverbend Family Ministries**

*"Supporting individuals, bringing wholeness to the family, and strength to the community."*

**WOOD RIVER, IL., April 3, 2013...**Riverbend Family Ministries invites all members of the community to join in observing National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April. Each year, more than 25,000 children in the state of Illinois are victims of child abuse or neglect.<sup>1</sup> Prevent Child Abuse Illinois has adopted the theme "Every Child Matters, Get Involved" for this year's awareness month; if we, as a community, are to have any hope of creating a brighter future for each one of those 25,000 children, community-wide participation will be critical – and this April is a perfect time to explore how you might be able to make a difference.

"April is a time to celebrate the important role that communities play in protecting children," said Tammy Iskarous, Executive Director of Riverbend Family Ministries (RFM). "Everyone's participation is necessary and essential. Focusing on ways to build and promote awareness and protective factors, in every interaction with children and

families, is the best thing our community can do to prevent violence against children and promote optimal child development.”

RFM is a consortium of non-profit organizations with the collective goal of “Supporting individuals, bringing wholeness to the family and strength to the community.” Although each of these organizations is an independent entity, they all work in tandem to address various aspects of individual, family and community needs. Throughout the month of April, these organizations and RFM’s other partners will be hosting various community events to promote awareness and build skills in preventing child abuse.

RFM is a presenting sponsor for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Kids Health, Safety & Activity Fair, hosted by the Madison County Child Advocacy Center (CAC), to be held at Alton Square Mall on Saturday April 13, 2013 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Christy Schaper, Development Specialist for the CAC, said, “This event was created to honor and celebrate Child Abuse Prevention Month (April) and bring together resources and information to strengthen our community making it a better and safer place to live and work. We ask so often for the support of local businesses and organizations in our community, this event has been created as a way to give back.”

RFM agencies CASA, RAVEN, and Safe From the Start (a program of PhoenixCrisis Center) will all have information and agency staff at the fair to share about the resources at RFM and provide support to the community. Safe From the Start will also be offering free parent and child educational seminars starting at 11:00 AM on the Upper Level in the old WellnessCenter; these seminars are new to this year’s fair and will address “What your Child’s Behavior May Be Telling You” in a way that both parents and children can enjoy and participate. There will also be “Online Safety” seminars courtesy of the Illinois Attorney General; each presentation will last approximately 15 minutes and will include opportunities to ask questions and learn about additional resources.

In addition to the Kids Health, Safety & Activity Fair, CASA will also be hosting the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Superhero Run the same morning of Saturday April 13, 2013 at Wood River Park & Recreation; registration begins at 8:00 AM. RFM invites everyone to come be a superhero for kids by participating in the 9:00 AM 5k run/walk or the 10:00 AM 1-mile fun run before heading over to the Kids’ Fair later that day (superhero costumes are optional and encouraged).

For more information on either event or to register for the Superhero Run, please contact Tammy Iskarous at 618-251-9790.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Administration for Children & Families. Child Maltreatment 2011 . <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cm11.pdf>