



## **Community Leaders Spotlight Child Abuse and Neglect**

*Hamilton County had more than 6,100 Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect in 2006*

**Cincinnati, Ohio (March 31, 2008)** More than 6,100 colorful pinwheels – each representing a report of child abuse or neglect to Hamilton County’s 241-KIDS hotline – will be planted near the Underground Railroad Freedom Center on Wednesday in a dramatic attempt to draw attention to one of the area’s more horrific problems.

Pinwheels for Prevention is part of Prevent Child Abuse Ohio’s statewide campaign to promote awareness and prevention of child abuse. Many citizens are unaware of how widespread the child abuse problem is in their local communities. The 6,141 colorful pinwheels depict this in a very dramatic way.

“Pinwheels depict the innocence of childhood, an innocence that is often shattered by abuse and neglect,” said Moira Weir, director of the Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services, which operates the child abuse reporting hotline. “It is estimated 1 million children in this country are abused and neglected each year, and that it takes more than \$100 billion to respond to that abuse. These numbers are unacceptable. I dream of a day when there are no pinwheels to plant.”

Hamilton County joins all 88 Ohio counties participating in Pinwheels for Prevention as a kick off to Child Abuse Prevention Month in April. Representatives from several local agencies assisting in the fight against child abuse will answer questions from the media at 10 a.m., while students from Cincinnati Public Schools plant the colorful pinwheels.

This year’s Pinwheels event is sponsored by Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, Hamilton County’s Department of Job and Family Services, Hamilton County’s Family and Children First Council, the Council on Child Abuse of Southern Ohio, Inc., the Cincinnati Police Department and the Hamilton County Sheriff’s Department.

Here are the details on this year’s event:

**What:** Pinwheels for Prevention

**When:** 10 a.m., April 2 (best time for pictures of students planting the pinwheels; experts available for interviews)

**Where:** Grassy lot south of the Freedom Center (northern edge); interviews available inside in case of rain.

**Who:** Community leaders, CPS students and Cincinnati Reds’ mascot Gapper

**Why:** To promote the awareness and prevention of child abuse and neglect

For more information, call:

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