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Hamilton County to Hold Live Chat on Signs and Reporting of Child Abuse

Cincinnati (Aug. 23, 2010) Hamilton County will hold a live public chat Wednesday, Sept. 24, to discuss and answer questions about the more subtle signs of child abuse, along with the importance of the public reporting suspicions of abuse and neglect to the county's Children's Services Division.

The 2 p.m. chat is part of the "Do Ask, Do Tell" campaign, which goes beyond the bruises and encourages teachers, police officers, doctors, child care workers and other legally-designated "mandated reporters" to look for less obvious signs of neglect or even circumstances where children are placed into dangerous situations. The mandated reporters are to ASK themselves if they have worries about the children they encounter and to TELL Hamilton County Children's Services when they do.

The campaign also has a general public component, asking average citizens to act as they eyes and ears of the Children's Services Division and report abuse and neglect when they suspect it. All suspicions can be reported anonymously through the agency's reporting hotline, 241-KIDS (5437).

To participate and ask questions in the 2 p.m. chat, residents can click on this link:

<http://www.hcjfs.hamilton-co.org/BoldChat/Chat/ChildAbuse.htm> A link also will be posted on www.hcjfs.org. An e-mail will be sent to subscribers of the [HCJFS Update](#) newsletter and to Facebook and Twitter (hamiltoncojfs) followers. To sign up for the newsletter, visit www.hcjfs.org.

Nine out of 10 cases of child abuse go unreported, according to recent studies. More than 2,400 Hamilton County children were found to be victims of child abuse and neglect in 2010, so that number would skyrocket to more than 20,000 if studies hold true. One of the reasons cited: those who work with children either do not recognize the signs or do not want to report their suspicions.

The "Do Ask, Do Tell" campaign features a five-minute instructional video that details the signs of abuse and explains situations that our dangerous to children. The video is targeted at mandated reporters and the hope is school districts will share it with teachers, police departments will show it at roll calls, child care operators will show it to workers, etc.

The video can be found at the campaign's website, www.doaskdotellus.com, along with a 30-second public service announcement – aimed at raising awareness among the general public -- that airs through October to Tristate television audiences. The website also lists facts and signs of abuse.

Hamilton County Job and Family Services

Hamilton County Job and Family Services administers federal, state and local programs for those in need. The Department helps with local child protection, elderly protection, child care, child support enforcement, workforce development, cash assistance, food assistance and Medicaid disbursement. Servicing Hamilton County since 1947, the Department helps hundreds of thousands each year and is accredited by the Council on Accreditation, an international, independent, not-for-profit child and family service accrediting organization.