

Local

# Stand Against Child Abuse set for KWC lawn

✎ By Renee Beasley Jones Messenger-Inquirer

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Last year, the record-breaking crowd that attended the annual Stand Against Child Abuse resource fair ate 500 hot dogs lickety-split.

To make sure no one misses out this year, organizers asked Kentucky Legend for at least 1,000 hot dogs, said Kristy Clark, coordinator for Green River Area Development District's Community Collaboration for Children. The CCC and Department for Community Based Services host the event, which provides resources for parents and loads of fun for children.

The Stand, which is free to the public, will take place from 4:30 to 7 p.m. Thursday on the Kentucky Wesleyan College lawn in front of Foster Field.

The CCC hosts the event in April, which is National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

According to the most recent DCBS statistics, state officials verified nearly 3,300 cases of child abuse and neglect in a 17-county region that includes the GRADD area.

"The Stand is a unique event, pulling together dozens of community partners who have an interest in children and families," Clark said. "It is a fun atmosphere with a serious goal -- child abuse prevention."

Dyana Newton has attended the past eight years.

"The first year I went I was pregnant with my (older) son," she said. "After I had him, I was able to become a parent in the CCC."

As part of that group, she has helped plan the annual event.

"It's the only event that I'm aware of that the entire community can stand up together against child abuse," Newton said.

Children's activities include a bounce house, petting zoo, crafts, games and more.

While children play, parents can review information about a variety of resources. "There are a lot of parents who aren't aware of all the resources that can better their lives," Newton said.

Parking will be available at Legacy Owensboro, which is next to the event. In case of rain, the Stand will take place at the same time and place on April 19.

The Stand started about 15 years ago with residents lining Frederica Street holding signs that brought attention to child abuse. People are encouraged to continue that practice, Clark said.

She estimated last year's crowd hit 1,000. She's hoping for another record-breaking crowd this year.

"That's what we want," Clark said. "The more people we can bring in and the more awareness we can create, the better for our purpose."

Renee Beasley Jones, 270-228-2835, rbeasleyjones@messenger-inquirer.com