

Local

## Public invited to 'take stand' against child abuse

✎ By Austin Ramsey Messenger-Inquirer

🕒 04.11.17

The Green River Area Development District's Community Collaboration for Children and the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services is inviting people in the region to take a stand against child abuse.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, and the CCC is helping host the annual Stand Against Child Abuse at 4:30 p.m. Thursday on the lawn at Kentucky Wesleyan College. Several activities for children are planned, including bounce houses, a petting zoo, face painting, balloons, bubbles, a coloring station and more. Organizers say the annual event helps bring attention to an issue that continues to plague our nation, state and local communities.

"This subject is often ignored," said CCC Coordinator Kristy Clark. "We may not want to think that we have it here, but the numbers show we do."

According to the most recent statistics from the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, child protective services in the commonwealth investigated 2,677 allegations of abuse or neglect of minors within Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union and Webster counties in 2016 -- including 1,187 cases that were substantiated.

The problem, Clark said, is growing, yet all Kentucky citizens have a legal responsibility to report it.

Any concerns that child abuse, neglect or dependency are happening should be reported Kentucky Child Protection Hotline at 1-877-597-2331 or your local law enforcement agency, she said.

"Prevention means working hard and doing what's necessary to ensure that there is an end to this," Clark said. "Our organization is doing everything it can to intervene before it escalates out of control."

The CCC helps fund Owensboro's Building Stronger Families program and funds a coalition of regional partners in a seven-county area to help find solutions for children who are at risk of abuse.

Thursday's event is free and open to the public. Clark said several organizations will be represented there, and parents can pick up information about services or programs that can help them balance the stresses of parenting, working, paying the bills and more.

More information about CCC or the event is available by calling Clark at 270-926-4433.

Austin Ramsey, 270-691-7302, aramsey@messenger-inquirer.com, Twitter: @austinrramsey