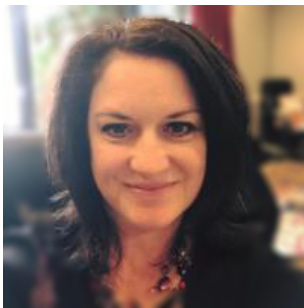




the power to prevent

PREVENT CHILD ABUSE ILLINOIS
NEWS AND EVENTS

a note from our Executive Director



Dear Friends,

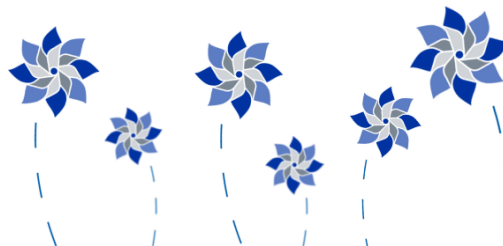
Happy Fall! Like so many of you, I love this time of year. The crisp air, colorful leaves, and smell of bonfires are some of my favorite signs that fall has arrived. Pumpkin patches, apple cider, and hayrides bring that familiar feeling of comfort and change that makes this season so special.

This October 25th is especially meaningful because it marks **Prevent Child Abuse Illinois' 35th anniversary**. For 35 years, we've been working alongside incredible partners, families, and communities to help every child grow up safe, supported, and loved. While so much has changed over the decades, our commitment to prevention has never wavered.

As we mark this milestone, I want to thank each of you for being part of this journey. Your dedication and partnership make a real difference every day, and together, we're building stronger, healthier futures for children and families across Illinois.



Tarra Winters
Executive Director
Prevent Child Abuse Illinois



news at PCA Illinois

Another Successful Downtown Springfield Family Funfest!

This year's annual **Downtown Springfield Family Funfest** was a tremendous success, drawing record crowds and delivering a full day of laughter, excitement, and community spirit. Among the standout additions was the **wildly popular Foam Party**, which had kids (and plenty of adults!) dancing, splashing, and cooling off in a sea of bubbles. The **classic sack races** brought out the competitive spirit in families of all ages, with cheers echoing across the park as participants hopped their way to victory.



Adding to the magic of the day were the **cosplay heroes**, including fan favorites like **Stitch, Batman, and more**, who posed for photos, high-fived fans, and helped bring the festival to life with their energetic presence. With the help of our **wonderful sponsors such as Meridian** and so many others, this year's Funfest proved once again why it's one of the community's most beloved traditions.



knowledge is power

October Is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October is **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**, an opportunity to strengthen our collective response to clients who may be

experiencing abuse in their relationships. Professionals who work with families, children, or individuals can play a crucial role in identifying red flags, offering validation, and connecting people to resources.

Recommended Resources for Professionals:

- One Love Foundation – Healthy & Unhealthy Relationship Guides: Practical tools to help clients recognize early signs of abuse and promote conversations about relationship health. joinonelove.org/relationships
- *Why Does He Do That?* by Lundy Bancroft: *Insight into the mindset and tactics of abusive partners—helpful for professionals to better understand patterns of control and coercion.*
- *But He Says He Loves Me* by Dina L. McMillan: *A resource to help clients recognize manipulation and warning signs in relationships that may initially appear loving.*
- M.E.A.N. Workbook & Love and Abuse Podcast by Paul Colaianni: Tools that help individuals identify manipulative or emotionally abusive behaviors, offering structure for reflection and discussion.


Your role as a professional matters. By being equipped with knowledge and resources, you can empower clients to recognize abuse, make informed choices, and access safety and support.

Check out PCA Illinois' program on the [Impact of Domestic Violence on Children](#) and order your free literature on domestic violence [here](#).






The holiday season is a time for joy, celebration, and making memories with loved ones—but it's also important to stay safe while enjoying the festivities. In this section, we're sharing practical tips to help keep your family safe, from decorating safely to preventing holiday fire hazards and staying healthy during travel. Let's make this season merry, bright—and safe for everyone! **Check out a few tips and more resources!!**

 **Check age recommendations on all toys**—small parts can be a choking hazard for little ones.

 Keep decorations away from **heaters, fireplaces, and other heat sources.**

 **Cut food into small pieces** for young kids to avoid choking (grapes, hot dogs, etc.).

Additional Resources

[Holidays | Safe Kids Worldwide](#)

[Making the Holidays Safe | Nemours KidsHealth](#)

[Holiday Safety - National Safety Council](#)

a call to action



DARKNESS to LIGHT'S
STEWARDS
of CHILDREN®

**Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children
Training/CSAP Literature**

It is paramount to learn how to prevent child sexual abuse. Now that children have returned to school and are involved in many extracurricular activities, it is particularly important to think about their safety when they are away from home.

Prevent Child Abuse Illinois offers the Darkness to Light, **Stewards of Children** training. The Stewards of Children training is an *evidence-informed* training that teaches all adults how to prevent, recognize, and respond responsibly to child sexual abuse. The **in-person** training is 2 ½ hours long and participants will receive a **workbook** that they can use as **their own personal prevention plan**. PCA Illinois staff are certified to provide this **in-person** training for free. The Northern Region Prevention Specialist is the only certified instructor to provide **Train the Trainer** in Illinois. Reach out to your region's Prevention Specialist today to schedule a training or contact Jennifer Samartano at jsamartano@pcaillinois.org if you are interested in hosting a Train the Trainer!

[FIND YOUR REGION'S PREVENTION SPECIALIST HERE](#)

prevention in partnership

SBS Train-the-Trainer Initiative Empowers Community Leaders

In August, Belinda Farr, Cook County Prevention Specialist and Rachel Chruszczyk, Southern Region Prevention Specialist, conducted a **Shaken Baby**

Syndrome (SBS) "Train-the-Trainer" session in Mt. Vernon for sixteen professionals serving the Doula and family support communities.



The primary goal of this initiative is to multiply our impact by certifying local professionals to deliver this critical curriculum themselves. The session was a resounding success, generating significant engagement among attendees. Most importantly, it resulted in sixteen new certified trainers who are now prepared to bring this essential prevention education directly to the families in their communities.

We are already seeing this model in action. **The Little Resource Center**, one of the organizations represented at the training, is already scheduled to provide this lifesaving information to their community. This is exactly the sustainable, grassroots impact we strive to create.

To schedule a Shaken Baby Syndrome training for your organization, please contact Belinda Farr at bfarr@pcaillinois.org.

Beacon in Illinois

BEACON is a centralized resource for Illinois youth and families seeking services for behavioral health needs. It's common for young people to struggle with

behavioral and/or mental health challenges. Please know you are not alone, and neither is your child.

If you would like to learn more about the Transformation Initiative, please visit <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/?item=161800>.

[BEACON Public Portal](#)



Power of Prevention National Conference

We're proud to share that one of our **Director of Programs, Kristin Kaufman** recently attended and presented at the **Prevent Child Abuse America Power of Prevention** national conference focused on child abuse and neglect prevention! This incredible opportunity allowed us to connect with passionate professionals and organizations from across the country who are doing similar impactful work and learn from nationally renowned experts and changemakers.



From learning about emerging trends and best practices to gaining insights into evolving policies, the experience was both inspiring and energizing. We're excited to bring back fresh ideas and new connections that will help us deepen our impact and continue serving our community with innovation and care!



staff spotlight

Tammy Queen

This month, we're shining a well-deserved spotlight on Tammy Queen, who plays a *huge* role in making our premier fundraiser, the Downtown Springfield Family Fun Fest, a success year after year!

From planning logistics months in advance to coordinating with the city, vendors, and food trucks, Tammy takes on the majority of the behind-the-scenes work that brings this beloved event to life.

Tammy ensures every team member has what they need, solve problems on the fly, and keeps everything running smoothly.

This year, we saw a huge increase in attendance and had over 1200 kids, parents, caregivers, and friends join us! We're so grateful for Tammy's leadership, organization, and passion for making Family Fun Fest a memorable experience for our community. Thank you for all you do!



One of many attractions that Tammy manages during the annual Downtown Springfield Family Funfest is the HUGELY successful sack races!



People begin to line up for the Foam Party, another new addition that Tammy brought to this year's festivities!

SAVE THE DATE!

Webinars

- **October 15th** – 10:00am-12:00pm - [Effects of Domestic Violence on Children](#)
- **November 4th** – 11:00am-12:30pm - [Project iGuardian/Know2Protect Campaign](#)



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