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National Child Abuse Prevention Month



***Blue Bow Campaign***

# 2024

## Information Packet

## **WELCOME TO BRIGHTPOINT'S BLUE BOW CAMPAIGN**

Thank you for leading efforts to prevent abuse and neglect throughout Illinois. By joining others participating in our Blue Bow Campaign, you will educate your community about prevention resources available to help parents and their children.

April is known nationally as Child Abuse Prevention Month. It all started 35 years ago when a Virginia grandmother tied a blue bow on the antenna of her car to honor her 18-month-old grandson who was a victim of child abuse. Her simple act ignited a national campaign to raise awareness of child abuse, to prevent it and take action to stop it. The blue bow is recognized as the national symbol of child abuse prevention. In April 1994, Brightpoint held its first Blue Bow Campaign for Child Abuse Prevention, it grows and gains momentum every year, we are proud to be supporting prevention efforts for 30 years!

***“Please wear a blue ribbon. Put one on your car. Give one to your friend. Tell them what it means. You may save a child’s life!”***

**Bonnie Finney, Grandmother and  
Blue Bow Campaign Originator**

### **How Can You Help?**

We encourage you to create your own unique Blue Bow Campaign. It can be as large or small – simple or elaborate – as you choose... *This packet explains how to conduct a campaign in your community and gives you lots of helpful information to make your campaign a success.* Every activity plays an important role in informing the public about the social crisis and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

## **What's Inside This Packet?**

What is a Blue Bow Campaign?	4
How to Start a Blue Bow Campaign Near You	5
Examples of Past Blue Bow Activities	7
Sample Proclamation	10
Fact Sheet	11
Spreading the Word: Tell Your Campaign Story	12
Resources to print and distribute	13

## **What is a Blue Bow Campaign?**

**Bringing awareness and resources about Child Abuse Prevention Month.**

**This year we are focusing on how economic stability is family stability which supports our belief that the most important asset for children and youth well-being is the family.**

### **Have a Blue Bow Campaign in your Community!**

A Blue Bow Campaign can be as simple or elaborate as you want. Some people decorate the trees with blue bows along a parkway or in front of businesses, family agencies or schools. Others work with local law enforcement to display blue bows on police and sheriff's vehicles. Sometimes groups distribute bows and helpful parenting information at stores. Organizations might host a special event featuring a speaker on the topic of child abuse and neglect. Blue bows can be handed out at an intersection in a small town. Large or small, your efforts are important and appreciated. Please know that Brightpoint can assist and guide you as needed through our Parents Care & Share program coordinators.

### **A few great ways to get involved:**

#### **Wear a Blue Ribbon**

Raise awareness in April by showing your support of child abuse prevention. Wear a blue ribbon and tell your family, friends, and co-workers what it represents.

#### **Tie Blue Ribbons**

Build a blue-ribbon tree -- at your child's school, at your church or even in your own yard. By creating a visual display, you're helping build awareness.

#### **Host a Blue Jeans Day**

Raise awareness in the workplace by hosting a Blue Jeans Day in April. In exchange for a small donation to the Blue Bow Campaign, employees can go casual and wear jeans to work for a day.

#### **Become a Volunteer**

April is also National Volunteer Month! To become involved in one of our programs, please visit [www.brightpoint.org/get-involved/ways-to-help/](http://www.brightpoint.org/get-involved/ways-to-help/)

#### **Attend an Event**

Blue Bow Campaign events are happening all throughout April. Prevent Child Abuse Illinois maintains an extensive statewide calendar that you can visit online to find an event near you. <https://www.preventchildabuseillinois.org/copy-of-cap-month>

## How to Start a Blue Bow Campaign Near You

### 1. When and Where

Choose a date, time and location. Consider a mall, large department store, grocery store, financial institution, village hall, fast food restaurant, church, school, auto repair shop or a large gas station...someplace with heavy traffic. Get permission from management to be on the property and try to get them excited about the event. If a PTA or classroom launches a campaign, work with the PTA president, classroom teachers and principal. Enclosed in your packet is a sheet detailing different examples from past partnerships.

### 2. Bows

Florists and fabric stores are good sources for ribbon. For lapel pins, little gold pins are needed. **National Child Abuse Prevention month blue is royal blue.** Ask a florist or fabric store to donate the ribbon and/or pins. Make lapel pins ahead of time. Find out the average traffic at your location and make at least that many bows.

You may also order large bows and lapel bows from the following vendors:

- Lapel bows: The Ribbon Factory. Lapel bows (royal blue, 3/8" x 7 1/2") can be purchased in bulk bags of 720 bows. Call 866-827-6431 or go to their website: [www.ribbonfactory.com](http://www.ribbonfactory.com).
- 8" pull bows: Paper mart. Royal Blue, 8" pull bows can be purchased from Paper Mart in rolls of 50 pull bows. Call 800-745-8800 or go to their website: [www.papermart.com](http://www.papermart.com).
- Brightpoint's Blue Bow Campaign can also give you lapel bows and ribbons as supplies last.

### 3. Printed Material

Distribute bows along with helpful parenting information. Materials can include statistics about child abuse and neglect in addition to useful information about preventing child abuse. As a partner, you are invited to include your own name and logo on the official materials we can provide.

### **Additional Material Suggestions:**

- Distribute a flyer with some parenting tips and phone numbers of child abuse prevention and parenting resources in your community. A flyer can be simple and reproduced on a copy machine.
- Give out a bookmark with the same information as mentioned above. Be sure to print bookmarks on card stock.
- Make a resource booklet for parents. Provide a list of family support resources in your community that support parents and help prevent child abuse. You should find out which agencies and organizations provide child abuse prevention and treatment services in your community. This is a larger task but can provide more comprehensive information.
- Ask a local business to donate paper, artwork, printing....whatever you need. Offer to include their information on the materials you distribute. Also be sure to include a local number for people to call.
- Engage your local media...send them public service announcements. Local television, cable, and radio stations, as well as newspapers and publications, are often happy to promote worthwhile endeavors to benefit the community.
- If you are part of a faith community, consider having a special service to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect. Offer support and resources on how to be a good parent and how to protect our children. We have a brochure for churches with ideas about a Blue Bow Sunday in April.

### **4. Proclamation**

Ask dignitaries like your mayor or school principal to proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. A sample proclamation is enclosed for you to fill in.

### **5. Follow-Up**

Don't forget to document your Blue Bow event. Take lots of pictures and video, if possible. Invite local reporters to attend. Send a picture and a press release to your local newspapers. We want to acknowledge you as a partner, too, so please forward information to Brightpoint at the email address listed on page 10.



A winning poster from Brightpoint's Community School's Poster Contest

### **Examples of Past Blue Bow Activities**

- Police officers, State Police and Sheriff's departments displayed blue bows on their car antennae or grills.
- Courthouse events:
  - Courthouses in several counties have been decorated with blue bows. The blue bows have remained on display through the month of April.
  - "Hands Around the Courthouse:" In several counties, people have gathered during a lunch hour at the courthouse. Linked by a long blue ribbon, they have formed a circle around the courthouse. Small lapel bows and information about community resources were distributed to participants and passersby, who sometimes choose to participate.
- Head Start centers, childcare centers and schools have distributed blue bows to staff and families.

- The Chicago Children's Museum distributed positive parenting information and blue bow magnets to parents and school groups throughout April. They also sponsored "Free Family Nights" each Thursday in April with resources and activities for families.
- "Put a Chill on Child Abuse" events: Local organizations served free snow cones or ice cream at college campuses, neighborhoods, subsidized housing communities, churches, schools or social service agencies to raise awareness. Positive parenting resources were distributed to parents.
- Several churches have designated one Sunday in April as "Blue Bow Sunday." Lapel bows, parenting literature, and special sermons have been preached about the need and ways to protect children.
- The Muslim Women's Alliance set up a table and distributed lapel bows attached to a parent-friendly child abuse prevention information card at a conference.
- Some Community Schools in Chicago have sponsored poster and poetry contests for children in an after-school program. The top two children whose posters and poems were judged the best from each school received a \$50 gift card.
- Community Hope Center, a food and clothing pantry that also housed a Parents Care & Share weekly support group, distributed 10,000 blue bows during April to church congregations, businesses, and libraries. Blue bows were also placed in food baskets that were delivered to the needy during April.
- The Illinois Liquor Commission gave away a blue lapel bow attached to a card with a child abuse prevention message to all liquor license renewals in April.
- The Chicago Field Museum's Brachiosaurus (the world's largest dinosaur) donned a BIG blue bow.
- Many local communities have decorated their main street or their town square with blue bows tied to lampposts.



- The 20th Judicial Circuit Family Violence Coordinating Council (serving St. Clair, Monroe, Randolph, Washington, and Perry counties) hung teardrops on trees in the St. Clair County courthouse. Each teardrop represented 10 reported cases of child abuse. Several schools solicited drawings from students on the topic “A World without Violence.” The pictures were publicly displayed.
- The Third Judicial Circuit Family Violence Coordinating Council held an event at the Madison County Courthouse. Children created a paper chain with pictures of “A World without Violence”. The chain was hung on the light posts in the courtyard and displayed throughout April in the courthouse from the second-floor balcony.
- Highland Civic Woman’s Club (GFWC) handed out 600 blue bows and fliers to area schools as well as holding a bake sale at a department store. They displayed a “Don’t Shake Your Baby” poster and played a “Don’t Shake Your Baby” video. During their April meeting, they included a 10-minute presentation on child abuse awareness/prevention.
- The Jackson County Child Abuse Prevention Month Committee held a candlelight vigil at the University Mall. The event featured children’s activity tables, resources for parents, musical entertainment by the Carbondale Community High School Jazz Choir, presentation of awards to 17 poster and essay contest winners, and a keynote speaker. Attendees were asked to tie blue ribbons on a tree in remembrance of lives lost to child abuse. High school students painted the Elgin YWCA front windows with a blue bow awareness theme. The windows remained decorated throughout the month.
- The Woodridge Junior Women’s Club distributed “Be a Lifesaver” bookmarks, positive parenting tips, the Parents Care & Share referral number and Lifesaver candies throughout the community. Each club member tied a blue ribbon around a tree in her yard.
- Women’s groups, youth groups, and student councils have distributed blue bows and parenting information at grocery stores, department stores, restaurants, car washes and other public venues. Money collected at some of these events has been donated to Parents Care & Share and other child abuse prevention programs.

## SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

### Blue Bow Campaign Child Abuse Prevention Month Proclamation

- Whereas** every child deserves to grow up in a nurturing environment, free from abuse, neglect, violence or endangerment of any kind; and,
- Whereas** statistics of children who are abused and neglected escalate each year, last year,  
\_\_\_\_\_County had \_\_\_\_\_reported cases; and,
- Whereas** the effects of child abuse are felt by whole communities, and must be addressed by the entire community; and,
- Whereas** effective child abuse prevention programs succeed because of partnerships created among the courts, social service agencies, schools, religious organizations, law enforcement and the business community; and,
- Whereas** Parents Care & Share, a prevention program of Brightpoint's, offering positive parenting alternatives to help break the cycle of abuse, is sponsoring a Blue Bow  
Campaign to heighten awareness of the need to support families; and,
- Whereas** all citizens should become more aware of child abuse within the community and to become involved in its prevention and supporting parents to raise their children in a safe, nurturing environment;
- Therefore** I \_\_\_\_\_ **proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in \_\_\_\_\_  
County and call upon all citizens to increase their participation in efforts to prevent child abuse, thereby strengthening the communities in which we live.**

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*Signed*

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*Date*

## Fact Sheet

### The Need for Awareness is Great

Public awareness of how anti-poverty programs and policies could prevent child abuse and neglect are vital to providing assistance to families. Help us bring awareness to communities along with resources and solutions. Join us!

### Economic Stability is Family Stability

Historically the perspective of child welfare involvement has been attributed to the failure of the parents, however, research shows the reasons that lead to child welfare system involvement are complicated and often not due to individual failures. Rather, **system involvement is due to a variety of factors, not necessarily individual choices.**

**Economic stability plays a pivotal role in fostering family stability,** as it directly impacts a family's capacity to provide for its members' needs, thereby influencing the overall family dynamics and emotional well-being. Research indicates that economic instability can strain family relationships, increase stress, and, in severe cases, lead to neglect due to inadequate resources to care for family members. ***Families living in poverty are three times more likely to incidents of maltreatment.***

By addressing poverty and offering financial assistance, we target a root cause that leads families toward the child welfare system. This proactive approach provides families with the means to stabilize their situation, preventing scenarios where financial strain could result in neglect or abuse. Ultimately, these measures aim to maintain family unity and ensure that children remain in a safe, supportive home environment.

<sup>1</sup> Statistics are provided by Chapin Hall Policy Brief; System Transformation to Support Child & Family Well-Being: The Central Role of Economic & Concrete Supports

### An Effective Prevention Resource:

Parents Care & Share support Groups Parents Care & Share is a program of Brightpoint, which provides families with a place to take a break from the hard job of parenting, to feel safe discussing painful issues, to laugh over our mistakes, and to learn from—and give support to—others.

Parents Care & Share Groups:

- Are open to parents facing
- parenting challenges—no problem is too big or too small
- Are FREE
- Offer a companion children's program
- Help parents cope with the stresses of parenting and learn new skills to handle parenting challenges
- Enable parents to meet other parents who are facing similar challenges
- Are confidential within the limits of the law

Research indicates that when parents come out of isolation, share with other parents, and learn new parenting skills, their stress is reduced and the risk of child abuse and neglect decreases.

### Locating or Starting a Parents Care & Share Support Group:

Contact your local Parents Care & Share staff:

Chicago & Suburbs:

Ernestine Brown 312.858.3780

Rockford, DeKalb, & Central Illinois:

Dorothy Davis 309.834.5240

Visit our website: [www.brightpoint.org](http://www.brightpoint.org)

## Please Tell Us About Your Blue Bow Campaign Plans!

Your Name:

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Your Organization (if applicable)

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Organization type:

- ☐ School      ☐ Social Service      ☐ Faith Community      ☐ Medical      ☐ Club
- ☐ Business      ☐ Civic Organization      ☐ Individual/Family Co-workers      ☐ Other

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code : \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail : \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe what you plan to do:

Please tell us about the impact you hope to achieve:

- Are any celebrities, dignitaries or VIPs participating with you? How
- can we help you?

Please submit your information to:

Constance Spendal

[Cspendal@brightpoint.org](mailto:Cspendal@brightpoint.org)



## Resources for April 2024

Please print and distribute the following pagers as you have need.

Blue Bow Poster Contest

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FJcRNLLpR5yZeH2IE3IzHrCd90mnyQ-nANt4accoWbE/edit?usp=sharing>

Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope Documentary

Screening <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1I-P47haiQb05fE3JIJdOOHMM-qEe88e9/view?usp=sharing>

Wear Blue Day, Friday April 5 flyer

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FxAlhnlIsPvLnq1E4QfXZxDhfH5d251N/view?usp=sharing>

Blue Bow Protective Factor Handout

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u7ASuA2rhkNFf-zkIDMJo6HEeA5hqZaD/view?usp=sharing>

Blue Bow Tip Sheet for Parents

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eFnmQNKtNp2wwfgOOkcU9ufAbS5ugZqx/view?usp=sharing>

Blue Bow Coloring Page for Children

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z\\_gV1fSvQ1iNR9PSSt\\_NMHI0rTRQqQQK/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z_gV1fSvQ1iNR9PSSt_NMHI0rTRQqQQK/view?usp=sharing)



## Annual Children's Poster Contest

Each year Brightpoint's Blue Bow Campaign sponsors a poster contest during the April child abuse and neglect awareness campaign. During the 2024 campaign, 20 awards will be given statewide to children who create posters about healthy family life and relationships or about the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Winning posters will be highlighted during April, 2024 on social media. The top three posters will receive an additional award.

**Awards:** \$25 gift card for each of winning posters  
\$25 additional gift card for the third place poster in the state (\$50)  
\$50 additional gift card for the second place poster in the state (\$75)  
\$75 additional gift card for the poster voted the top in the state (\$100)

**How?** Children are invited to submit photos of their posters (not the actual artwork).  
(Cook County contestants are asked to submit original artwork)

- Poster size: Normal poster board size preferred, smaller acceptable.
- The theme of the poster should be about what healthy family life and relationships or about the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
- Children ages 10-18 may participate. Winning posters will be determined by two age categories: ages 10-13, & ages 14-18

**When?** Submissions are due by April 8, 2024. No Extensions.

**Submission? Counties outside of Cook:** Please email pictures of the artwork and questions about the contest to: Constance Spendal, [cspendal@brightpoint.org](mailto:cspendal@brightpoint.org)

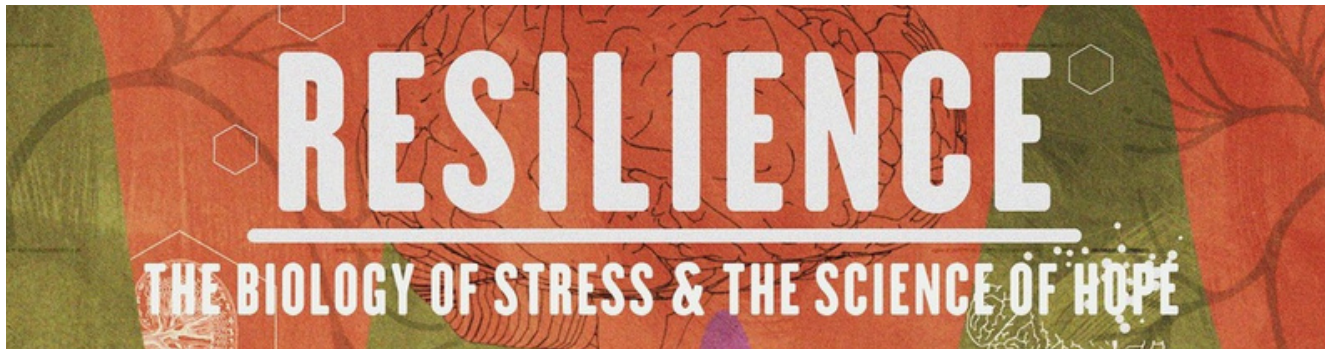
**Cook County:** Submit artwork at Brightpoint, 100 N. Western Ave., Chicago, IL 60612

**\*For submissions, please include child's name, age, city, parent's email address and parent's phone number (if we need to contact you regarding the awards).**





National Child Abuse Prevention Month



## Resilience Screenings in April on Zoom



**APRIL 3RD 7:00 PM**

**APRIL 10TH 7:00PM**

**APRIL 17TH 7:00 PM**

**APRIL 24TH 7:00 PM**

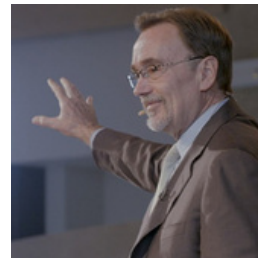
Click [HERE](#) to be added to the invitation list or email Ernestine: [Ebrown@brightpoint.org](mailto:Ebrown@brightpoint.org)



Vincent Fellitti,  
MD Kaiser  
Permanente  
San Diego Co-  
founder Ace  
Study

### Why Should You See this Film?

This compelling documentary explains how ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) were discovered and how they impact children and adults. The film follows pioneering individuals who looked at the ACEs research and the emerging science of Toxic Stress and asked, Why are we waiting? Each took this new information and used it in new ways.



Robert Anda, MD  
Epidemiologist  
Centers for Disease  
Control Co-  
founder Ace Study

Click **HERE**  
or Scan to  
Watch The  
Trailer





# WEAR BLUE DAY

APRIL 5, 2024



**Show your commitment to preventing child abuse!  
Wear your prevention blue and send pics to  
#GreatChildhoods | #GoBlueIllinois  
or [lcaspar@pcaillinois.org](mailto:lcaspar@pcaillinois.org)**

**CHILD ABUSE  
PREVENTION MONTH**  
APRIL 2023 



Search for us on all social media platforms



**Prevent Child Abuse  
Illinois**

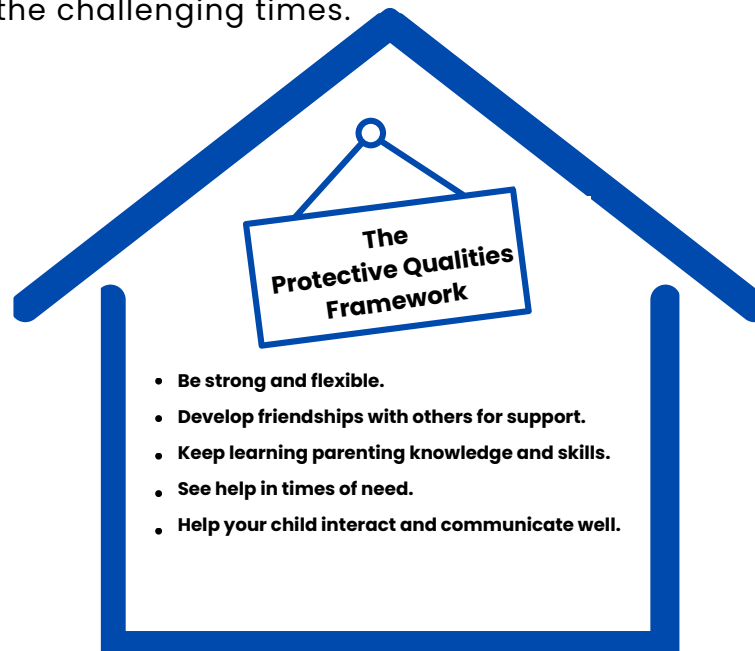
[www.preventchildabuseillinois.org](http://www.preventchildabuseillinois.org)



## Build A Solid Parenting Framework!

These are five qualities (or factors) that make parents strong. Individually, all of these qualities lessen stress and build strength. When all five of them are present in our parenting experience, they form a powerful framework to protect our children and to get the best outcomes for them. This is called the protective qualities framework.

What is a framework? A framework is an essential structure that holds everything together. The framework of a house holds it together and keeps it standing firm over the years and through all the storms and the daily wear and tear. In the same way, the protective qualities framework keeps our families strong in the good as well as the challenging times.



### For Personal Reflection



1. Which quality is the most natural for you to practice?
2. Which quality is more difficult for you to practice?
3. Do you have a recent success story that relates to one of the qualities?
4. What could make your parenting framework stronger?

**Would you take a quick, anonymous, two minute survey to rate yourself in each of the five qualities?**

Click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#) or Scan the QR Code to take the survey.  
The results will help us develop new resources to help parents become even stronger!



## **It's a Fact: All Parents Get Angry Sometimes**

All parents get angry at their children— sometimes even very angry. Whatever the reason, it is important that you keep in control of your anger so that you can always act responsibly for the good of your child and demonstrate to your child the correct ways of handling anger.

Here are some tips to help you the next time you feel angry at your child.

- Determine ahead of time what you will never do and stick to it when you are angry: “I will not strike my child.” “I will not yell and scream.” “I will not call my child hurtful names.”
- Ask yourself four quick questions:
  - “What is making me angry?”
  - “What does my child feel, need, or want?”
  - “Are my expectations unrealistic?”
  - How do I best respond in *this* moment?
- Empathize with what your child is feeling: “Yes, it sounds like that made you angry or confused you.” Empathy can reduce anger.
- Deliberately lower your voice if the conversation is heating up. This can inject calm into the situation and keep it from getting out of control. It also signals that you are in control.
- Cool down before you make threats or issue harsh punishments. Tell your child that you will discuss the consequences for her behavior later.
- Calmly remove your child from a situation that is making him angry or redirect him to another activity.
- Take a time out from the situation if you feel you are losing control of your anger and do something to relieve it: take a walk, take deep breaths, or call a friend for support. If your child is too young for you to leave alone, go in the next room for a moment and gain control.

If you struggle controlling your anger, seek help from a friend, another parent, educator, clergy, counselor, pediatrician or other health professional. Join a parent support group. Every parent needs some extra help and support from time to time.

Always remember, you **LOVE** your child!

## **The Ten Best Parenting Tips Ever**

### **From Parents<sup>1</sup> for Parents**

1. Establish a daily routine with your child and stick to it as much as possible. Children behave better in a daily, predictable routine.
2. Make sure you plan for “me” time. You need some time for yourself and a break from your child.
3. Learn to listen—really listen—to what your child is saying.
4. Join a parent support group to meet other parents. Knowing other parents for support and advice is important. You’ll find that you’re not alone.
5. Speak respectfully to your child just like you would to anyone else. Never call your child harmful names.
6. When your anger starts getting out of control, walk away and regain control. It is better to do nothing than to do something you will regret.
7. Never share a bed with your small child. Children need their own crib or bed for safe sleep.
8. Allow your child to get to know other people and children. If you need to leave your child with someone, the separation anxiety will be easier if he or she is familiar with other people. It is also important that you really know and trust who you leave your child with.
9. If your relationship with your spouse/partner is troubled, get help. Parenting is easier when parents (and other adults in the household) get along well and maintain a united front on parenting issues.
10. Give your child what he or she needs and what is best for them but not necessarily everything they want.

Brightpoint, formerly Children’s Home & Aid, has served Illinois children since 1883. We now engage with nearly 30,000 children, youth, and families each year in 67 counties across the state. Our organization’s mission is to advance the well-being of children by investing in families to disrupt the systemic and multi-generational cycle of racial, social, and economic inequality. We strive to build an equitable world where all children and families thrive in strong communities.

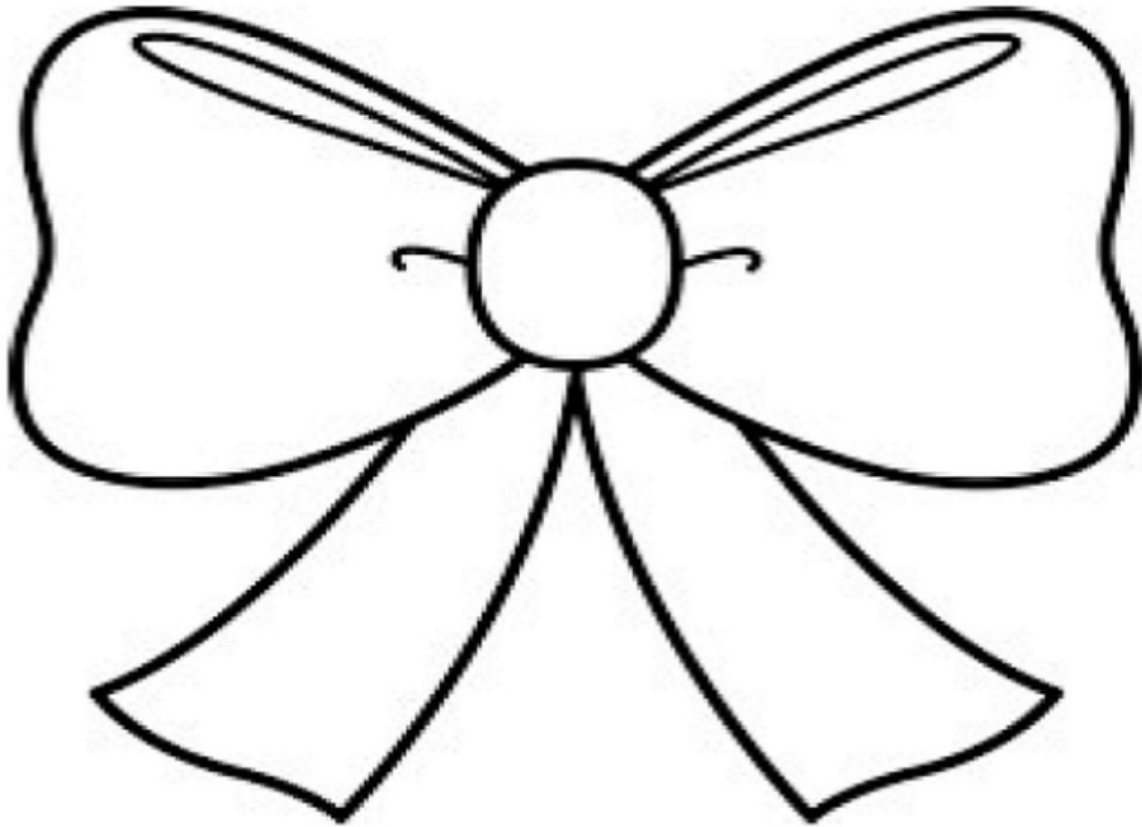
For more information about Brightpoint, please visit [www.brightpoint.org](http://www.brightpoint.org)



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<sup>1</sup> As suggested by parents in Brightpoint’s Parents Care & Share of Illinois program.

# Go Blue!



**Go Blue for Child Abuse Prevention**

[www.brightpoint.org](http://www.brightpoint.org)

**Brightpoint** Strong Families • Thriving Children

National Child Abuse Prevention Month



**Blue Bow Campaign**