

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

April, 2010 is rapidly approaching, and it is an important month. It is significant as it is coined "Child Abuse Prevention Month." Having been an advocate against child abuse for many years, I feel each and every month is imperative to educate, give recognition to child abuse, and defend our innocent children. These abused children include children who are presently being abused or children who have been abused in the past.

Most individuals are aware of the child abuse categories which include, but not limited to: verbal abuse; neglect; physical violent attacks against the child (children); emotional abuse; and sexual molestation. However, many people's knowledge of the subject of child abuse stops here. With Child Abuse Prevention Month around our corner, I feel compelled to expose facts that might enlighten the public on this epidemic that is usually hidden behind closed doors.

In my journey of speaking out against child abuse, I have come across many adults who hold onto the notion that the child will tell an adult about the abuse, thereby exposing the abuser. During my crusade, I have actually come in contact with Emergency Room personnel whom believe this concept is true. It is not. Unfortunate to the abused children, this belief is one contributing factor to the explosion of child abuse in our world. Yet, these children remain innocent.

This hushed epidemic is occurring each day, all over the world. Is this a reason to turn our backs on this ugly plague? Absolutely not, and it is the responsibility of informed and educated adults to take action and put a stop to this horrendous and unacceptable outbreak. Our children cannot defend themselves, but we can become involved and be that child's advocate, or savior.

Most tragically, the effects of being abused as a child usually alters that child's way of thinking, and will find themselves diagnosed as an adult with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and/or Bi-Polar Disorder for the remainder of his/her life. When the child eventually leaves the abuse, or becomes an adult, the serious lingering effects can and does wreak havoc on that person's life. A good analogy I would like to share with you, it is like being sentenced to prison for the remainder of your life, and you were never guilty in the first place. Worse yet, many or most perpetrators are the very people who are supposed to love and support you.

This atrocious cycle of child abuse will continue unless we, as concerned adults, step up to the plate, become involved and informed, and begin to take immediate action. It is our children who need a lending hand. It is our children who are our future.

By Joy McQuiston