



## Blue Sunday flies blue pinwheels Ending child abuse

An event that is regarded as the first case of child abuse to go to court occurred in New York City in 1864. Neighbors who were aware of the ill treatment of little Mary Ellen contacted a woman whom they thought could help. The woman, in turn, feeling much concern, but not sure what to do, went to Henry Bergh, founder of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, who investigated the conditions surrounding Mary Ellen and had the ASPCA attorney draw up a petition for the removal of the child from the home in which she had been living. Fortunately, the judge did remove Mary Ellen from her torturous situation and placed her in a nurturing environment. This case was instrumental in the world-wide recognition of child abuse and efforts to prevent it.

We've come a long way since then; however, child abuse still occurs, and the pinwheels on our lawn today are a reminder of that. But they are also a promise of positive measures that make child abuse less likely. **What can we do as individuals to help?**

1. Be a positive role model for parents in your family, your neighborhood, and your community by treating children in your sphere with respect and caring.



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2. Volunteer at places that have influence over children, such as the two entities our church partners with, Hellgate High School (or other schools), or the Parenting Place, which offers respite care and classes among their services. To volunteer for Hellgate, contact A'Lisa Scott, 406-544-7632. To volunteer for the Parenting Place, contact the Rev. Anita Rognas, 208-305-4022.
3. To report suspected child abuse, **call 1-866-820-5437**.

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