

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Go Blue” event aims to end child abuse in the Ozarks

Shining a Light on Preventing Child Abuse, One Pinwheel at a Time

SPRINGFIELD, Mo., (3/17/2025) – April is National Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month, and community members across the Ozarks are coming together to “Go Blue” to raise awareness about this critical issue on **Thursday, April 3, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at University Heights Baptist Church, located at 1010 S. National Ave.**

Community Partnership of the Ozarks’ (CPO) **Child Abuse and Neglect Collaborative** is hosting the event which will feature a panel discussion with key community stakeholders addressing the ongoing issue of child abuse and neglect in the region. **Attendees are encouraged to wear blue, the color associated with child abuse prevention**, and will have the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about how they can be part of the solution. According to the **2024 Community Focus Report**, child abuse and neglect continues to be a pressing issue in our community, remaining a red flag concern that demands attention and action.

"Every child deserves a safe and nurturing environment to grow and thrive. By coming together as a community, we can shine a light on child abuse prevention and work toward a future where every child in the Ozarks is protected and supported," **said Katiina Dull, Chair of CPO’s Child Abuse and Neglect Collaborative.**

Following the panel discussion and **remarks from Springfield Mayor, Ken McClure**, attendees will take part in planting a **symbolic pinwheel garden**, which will serve as a visual reminder throughout the month of April to keep child abuse prevention at the forefront of community consciousness. Pinwheels are recognized as the national symbol for child abuse prevention, representing the joy and innocence of childhood that every child deserves.

“Not only is this event designed to bring awareness and education for this important topic, but the goal is to give actionable steps for community members who want to make a difference,” Dull said.

For more information about the **Child Abuse and Neglect Collaborative**, visit copozarks.org/programs/can-collaborative/ For questions about this event, contact CPO’s Director of Community Collaboratives, Megan Garrett at mgarrett@copozarks.org

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ABOUT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP OF THE OZARKS: *The mission of Community Partnership of the Ozarks is to facilitate and promote the building of resilient children, healthy families, and strong neighborhoods and communities through collaboration, programming and resource development. For more information on the Partnership’s collaborative efforts and programs, visit www.cpozarks.org.*