

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013

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## **Blue Bows Tied on Michigan Avenue Trees for Child Abuse Prevention Month**

Over 100 Community Leaders Gather to Kick-Off April's Awareness Campaign to Protect Illinois Children

(CHICAGO) – Over 100 community leaders today joined Nancy Ronquillo, president and CEO of Children's Home + Aid, and other child advocates at a kick-off Blue Bow Ceremony to pledge support for the 2013 Blue Bow Campaign. This 17<sup>th</sup> annual Blue Bow event at Fourth Presbyterian Church marks the beginning of National Child Abuse Prevention Month in Illinois.

"In the state of Illinois, the Department of Child and Family Services receives a report of child abuse or neglect every five minutes," said Ronquillo. "Child sex abuse is reported every two hours, and the death of a child by abuse or neglect occurs every day and a half. Children's Home + Aid works with our partner agencies to make the public aware of this issue and provides dozens of programs that strengthen families and protect children all across Illinois."

During the program, which included remarks from Ronquillo and several community leaders, poetry readings, and artwork displayed by Chicago youth; community members, children and volunteers tied hundreds of blue bows, the national symbol of child abuse prevention, on the trees along Michigan Avenue.

A representative from the office of Dorothy Brown, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County delivered a proclamation recognizing Children Home + Aid's work in fighting child abuse and neglect in Illinois, and Lieutenant King-Smith from the Englewood (007<sup>th</sup>) Police District also attended to show her support.

To download high-resolution photos from the event, please click [here](#).

Child Abuse Prevention Month activities will be held throughout the state during the month of April. Visit [childrenshomeandaid.org/bluebowcampaignn2013](http://childrenshomeandaid.org/bluebowcampaignn2013) for a list of statewide events and for information on parent support programs.

### **About the Blue Bow Campaign**

Since 1989, the national Blue Bow Campaign has existed to raise awareness of child abuse and prevention. The Illinois Blue Bow Committee, run by Children's Home + Aid and a partnership of social and community service organizations, has annually hosted dozens of events throughout the month of April – the nation's Child Abuse Prevention Month. The purpose of these events is to bring attention to the prevalence of child abuse in Illinois and to educate the public about resources available in our communities to help parents and children prevent abuse. In 2012, Illinois had 26,537 reported cases of child abuse, 15,590 families who indicated the presence of abuse in their homes, and 90 child deaths as

a result of abuse. For more information on the Blue Bow Campaign and how prevention can help, please visit [www.childrenshomeandaid.org/bluebowcampaign2013](http://www.childrenshomeandaid.org/bluebowcampaign2013)

**About Children's Home + Aid**

Children's Home + Aid is a leading child and family service agency in Illinois. Each year, it protects, educates and counsels more than 40,000 children, youth and families to overcome the overwhelming obstacles of poverty, abuse and neglect. The dedicated team of staff and volunteers deliver more than 70 programs including foster care, adoption services, early childhood education, family counseling, and youth services in 40 Illinois counties. For 130 years, Children's Home + Aid has been a compassionate advocate helping to shape public policy around early childhood, child welfare and juvenile justice. For more information about Children's Home + Aid, visit [childrenshomeandaid.org](http://childrenshomeandaid.org).

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