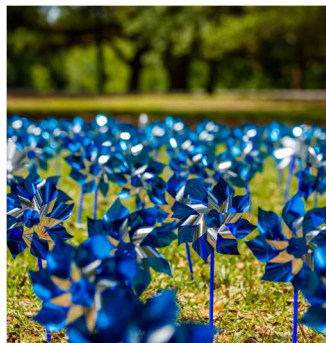


4/27/2024

In 2008, Prevent Child Abuse America introduced the blue pinwheel as a national symbol for child abuse prevention. The pinwheel is meant to represent frivolity, joy, and fun – and it serves as a physical reminder of the childhood we wish for all our children.



Pinwheel gardens bloom each April as we commemorate Child Abuse Prevention Month, so for the past few weeks, as I go along my usual route to do my usual things, I see blue and silver pinwheels everywhere. They start in my own yard, where I have a little cluster, down Patterson Avenue at a dentist's office, over to Monument Avenue at the orthodontists, until finally I arrive at work where they adorn the front flowerbed.

I personally am involved in an organization called Greater Richmond SCAN, which is the only local nonprofit solely dedicated to the prevention and treatment of abuse and neglect in the Greater Richmond area. You can read about SCAN's programs here:

<https://grscan.com/about>. Just last weekend, SCAN held its 22nd Annual Progressive Dinner and Auction to raise money and awareness for its mission. I was privileged to serve as the Honorary Chair of the event.

Meanwhile, back at the office, The Office of Safe Environment has had a busy month highlighting Child Abuse Prevention in many meaningful ways. The events and resources provided by the office during April can be found here: <https://richmonddiocese.org/child-abuse-prevention-awareness/>

In anticipation of April's observance of protecting children, Pope Francis said the following:

“In confronting the scandal of abuse and the suffering of victims, we might well grow discouraged, since the challenge of restoring the fabric of broken lives and of healing pain is enormous and complex. Yet, our commitment must not wane; indeed, I encourage you to move forward, so that the Church will be, always and everywhere, a place where everyone can feel at home...”

“Our commitment must not wane....” Let us remember these words and keep them in our hearts and minds as we do all we can to protect God's children.

God Bless,

Margaret