CHILD ABUSE: a community issue

by: Justine Standing Crow
Standing Rock Sioux

In 1998, approximately 1,100 kids died of child abuse, that is more than 3 children a day. Three-quarters of those children were under 5 years of age; about 38% were 1 years of age. Child abuse is the leading cause of death for kids four and under. Some causes of death are, falling, choking, suffocation, drowning, residential fires, and motor vehicle accidents. According to www.childabuse.com, about 3 million reports of child abuse are made each year, and about every 10 seconds child abuse is reported.

More than half of child abuse reports are related with alcohol and drug abuse. Of the men and women serving time in prisons and jails, most can be related to child abuse. That is more than the general population. Child abuse is damage to a child, which has no reasonable explanation for why the damage was done. Some examples of child abuse are: nonaccidental physical injury, neglect, sexual molestation, and emotional abuse. Some ways we can prevent these things are as follows:

~Educate health and child welfare agencies about child abuse and its effects on children now days.
~Involve the community in an approach to provide prevention services to those in need of help.
~Educate the public about child abuse and the costs to society.
~Provide easy access to help groups and many other services for all child-abused residents.
~Educate children and families about the issues of child abuse. This includes teachers, service providers, and health care professionals.

Hospitals, schools, and community agencies have an important role to play in child abuse prevention. Educational campaigns are always needed to make the public aware of the seriousness, and how they can make a difference. It is important to precede prevention strategies to make the public fully aware of staying committed to preventing child abuse.

For more information go to www.childabuse.com.