

COMMUNITY CORNER

Protecting our children from abuse is top priority this month, always

By Col. Kevin Brown
GARRISON COMMANDER

The slogan for the 2011 Child Abuse Prevention campaign is "Safe or Sorry? Every 10 seconds, a case of child abuse is reported — that adds up to 3 million cases of child abuse each year (Army OneSource.com, March 2011). As the Fort Riley garrison commander, I promise to advocate for the protection of our military children, provide the resources our staff needs to combat child abuse and encourage prevention of, not reaction to, these tough situations.



Col. Brown

In Fiscal Year 2010, there were almost 116 substantiated child abuse cases at Fort Riley. Data from the U.S. Army continues to show increases in incidents of child neglect during deployments.

The Month of the Military Child is full of activities celebrating our children. As we celebrate, let's not forget these numbers. Each number is more than that — it is a child who wasn't protected. During the Month of the Military Child, let's celebrate our children and reflect on the promises we can make to keep them safe and healthy.

As a neighbor or a friend, you can help out a stressed parent who needs a break. Offer to watch their children while they run errands or take time for themselves. Remind them it's OK to ask for help. If you suspect child abuse or neglect, report your suspicions to the military police by calling 785-239-MPMP (6767).

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Child Welfare Information Gateway, the following may be signs of child abuse or neglect:

THE CHILD

- Shows sudden changes

in behavior or school performance

- Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents' attention
- Has learning problems (or difficulty concentrating) that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
- Lacks adult supervision
- Is overly compliant, passive or withdrawn
- Comes to school or other activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home

THE PARENT

- Shows little concern for the child
- Denies the existence of — or blames the child for — the child's problems in school or at home
- Asks teachers or other caregivers to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves

- Sees the child as entirely bad, worthless or burdensome
- Demands a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot achieve
- Looks primarily to the child for care, attention and satisfaction of emotional needs

THE PARENT AND CHILD

- Rarely touch or look at each other
- Consider their relationship entirely negative
- State that they do not like each other

As a parent, recognize your limitations and know that it's OK to seek help. Many of our Families live far from their extended Families. Consider the Army your extended Family and take advantage of all of the support that Family offers.

Explore the resources offered through Army Community Service. Take advantage of the many parenting classes offered. Increasing your knowledge as a parent not only makes your life easier, but it helps your children be the best they can be and builds resilience in our community.

UPCOMING CLASSES AND EVENTS FOR CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

April 7, 14 and 21 — Become A Love and Logic Parent, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at ACS

April 10 — Free Safety ID Kits, noon to 2 p.m. at Marshall Army Airfield during the Month of the Military Child Festival

April 12 — Screen-Free Parenting, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at ACS

April 18 — Stress Management for Parents (with free back massages), 1-2:30 p.m. at ACS Resiliency Center

April 19 — "Hi Mom, Hi Dad" free DVD recording for children of deployed Soldiers, 3:30-5:30 p.m. at School Age Services, 5810 Thomas Ave.

April 19 — The Secrets of Effective Fathers, 9 a.m. — noon at ACS

For more information, or to register for a class, call 785-239-9435. For more information about Month of the Military Child activities, visit www.rileymwr.com

As a commander or Family Readiness Group leader, take advantage of the classes offered through ACS. Get to know your Families and help bring classes to them. The Family Advocacy Program provides commander and troop education, parent education programs that include free child care, child safety classes and stress management classes. To arrange for a class, call FAP at 785-239-9435 or visit the ACS page at www.rileymwr.com under Family Services.

What promise can you make to our children? Together we can prevent child abuse.

If you would like to comment on this article, or suggest a topic to be covered in the Community Corner, email rlc_post_newspaper@conus.army.mil.



Shandi Dix | POST

Fifth-grade teachers at Ware Elementary School perform "I Got a Feeling" April 1 during the sixth annual Ware Elementary Test Prep Assembly to help motivate third-, fourth- and fifth-graders for the Kansas State Assessments.

Teachers perform 'Glee' musical to prep students for assessments

By Shandi Dix
1ST INF. DIV. POST

The performance roles swapped April 1 when Ware Elementary School teachers put on a musical performance for Ware students to help motivate the students for the Kansas State Assessments taken by third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students.

This was the sixth annual Ware Elementary Test Prep Assembly.

"It is a way to reinforce good test-taking skills in a fun, exciting way," said Susan Gillespie, music teacher, Ware Elementary.

Teachers were given a list of songs that had been performed on the popular television show "Glee." Each team of teachers selected one song from the list and rewrote the lyrics to pertain to testing.

Songs included "Sweet Testing Time" performed by fourth-grade teacher; "We Are Young," performed by paraprofessionals; "Ready For This Test" performed by first-grade teachers; "Smart Ware Bears" performed by second-grade teachers; "Test, Test Baby" performed by third-grade teachers; "Lean On Me" performed by fifth-grade teachers; "Math And Reading" performed by English Language Learner teachers; and "I Gotta Feeling," performed by administrators.

The entire Ware staff opened the show with Michael Jackson's "Thriller" and concluded the show with "Don't Stop Believin'."

"The entire staff learned the 'Thriller' dance in an after-school meeting, and then those who wanted to, could rehearse in the mornings before school in the music rooms," Gillespie said. "Individual teams rehearsed their



Ware Elementary School third-grade teacher Jared Larson raps "Test, Test Baby" to the tune of "Ice, Ice Baby" during Ware's sixth annual Test Prep Assembly performed to help motivate students for the Kansas State Assessments.

Shandi Dix
POST

songs on their own, and then one mass rehearsal was held the day before the show."

The assembly was the first time the entire show was run through from start to finish, she said.

Ware kindergarten teacher Bryan Scruggs, music teacher Freedom Brass and Gillespie created the assembly.

"As soon as the assembly is over, we usually have an idea for the next one," Gillespie said. "Through the years, all three teachers have written the script and the lyrics and have offered costuming and technical assistance as well."

For each performance Scruggs, Brass and Gillespie ensured the backdrop and stage is set, complete with lights and sound with the assistance of staff members.

Past performance themes have included: "Land of Aaaauggghs!," "Ware Band-

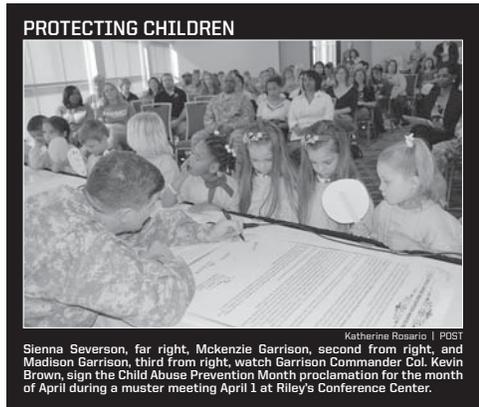
stand," "A Very Ware-y Fairy Tale" which took a Disney theme; "Hoory For Ware-y Wood" and "Awareican Idol."

Each year more teachers and staff get involved as performers and working behind the scenes making the assembly an all-staff production, Gillespie said.

"The Test Prep Assembly is a tradition that the Ware staff feels is an important one to continue," Gillespie said. "Schools are under a great deal of pressure in regard to test scores and this is just one way to help lessen the stress before the assessments begin."

Students look forward to the assembly each year and begin asking what the theme is before the performance. They are always interested and excited to see their teachers in a different role."

State assessments in schools at Fort Riley began April 4.



Katherine Rosario | POST

Sienna Severson, far right, McKenzie Garrison, second from right, and Madison Garrison, third from right, watch Garrison Commander Col. Kevin Brown, sign the Child Abuse Prevention Month proclamation for the month of April during a muster meeting April 1 at Riley's Conference Center.

HOUSE FILL AD

Blue Star Families launches essay contest for Month of Military Child

BLUE STAR FAMILIES

April is the Month of the Military Child. Blue Star Families, a national, nonprofit network of military families from all ranks and services, will be honoring the youngest heroes throughout the month, beginning with an essay contest for military children an-

swering the question "What does it mean to you to be a military child?"

The contest is open to any child in kindergarten through fifth grade with a parent or sibling, including step-parents and step-siblings, serving on active duty, in the Reserves or in the National Guard. Prizes will be given to the overall

winner and the top two entries in each age category.

Prizes include gift cards, e-readers, books, webcams and more.

To participate, see the rules and guidelines on the Blue Star Families website www.bluestarfam.org. Winners will be announced on May 11.