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**Phoenix Children's Hospital Kicks Off Child Abuse Prevention Month
State Unveils New Child Abuse Prevention Plan**

PHOENIX, Ariz. (March 28, 2006) – On Tuesday, March 28, between Noon and 1:30 p.m. at Phoenix Children's Hospital, the state of Arizona and Phoenix Children's kick off April as Child Abuse Prevention month and for the first time, Arizona CAN!, the state's child abuse prevention plan, is publicly shared. Representatives from Phoenix Children's, Prevent Child Abuse Arizona, and the Governor's Office for Children, Youth, and Families will attend.

Every day, the United States spends \$258 million as a direct or indirect result of child abuse and neglect. That's \$1461.66 per U.S. family each year (2001 Prevent Child Abuse America report). Child abuse is a price everyone pays.

One child in Arizona is abused or neglected every hour (Children's Defense Fund). In 2005, Phoenix Children's saw 424 cases of child abuse, resulting in seven deaths. Sixty-three of these cases were sexual abuse.

"One in four girls and one in six boys are sexually abused before they turn 18. This abuse is largely preventable. Our community needs to learn the signs of sexual abuse, how to react, and prevention tips to take a stand against it," said Jennifer Geyer, MD, Emergency Physician at Phoenix Children's.

Children's is teaching child abuse prevention tips to Valley businesses, day care centers, and community organizations. The "Stewards of Children" program provides seven steps to protect kids, including minimizing opportunity, talking openly about abuse with kids, and staying alert.

"It's about a safe environment for our kids. Research shows 93% of all sexual abuse victims know their abusers. It's the responsibility of everyone – parent, child care worker, neighbor, etc. – to protect Arizona's children," said Marcia Stanton, Child Abuse Prevention Coordinator at Phoenix Children's.

Phoenix Children's Hospital is Arizona's leader in pediatric care and is one of the 10 largest free-standing children's hospitals in the nation. The most comprehensive array of pediatric specialists in the State practice at this one organization. The outstanding clinical expertise, as well as high patient volume, and an unwavering commitment to caring only for children, all contribute to Children's leadership position. For information about Phoenix Children's, visit the Hospital's award-winning website at www.phoenixchildrens.com.