



April 24, 2009

Agency's Circus Night celebrates families

BY MICHELLE GEORGE
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LANCASTER - The parking lot of Fairfield County Job & Family Services was alive Thursday with clowns, a pony and hundreds of smiling children bearing colorful facepaint.

The event, known as Circus Night, is one of several events agency officials put on every April as part of Family Festival Month.

Circus Night recently was combined with the agency's annual child abuse candlelight walk as a way to bring families together for one night and draw attention to the issue of child abuse and neglect.

"We used to do them separately, but by combining them, families come for the circus and then stay for the candlelight vigil," said Child Protective Services Director Rich Bowlen. "It's worked out really well."

Community Services Director Laura Holton said she started Circus Night nine years ago. She said the event used to take place inside JFS but eventually moved out into the parking lot as yearly attendance grew.

She said new attractions are added every year. This year's new activities included tours of a Lancaster fire truck and a Fairfield County Sheriff's SWAT vehicle.

"It's all about celebrating families," Holton said.
