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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL FLAG TO BE RAISED OVER STATE CAPITOL
Flag is in recognition of children lost to violence**

Carson City—Governor Jim Gibbon's Chief Operating Officer, Diane Cornwall, will join Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Director Mike Willden and area children in raising the Children's Memorial Flag in a ceremony at the State Capitol on April 25, 2008, at 9:30 AM. Members of two large foster families will be present for the ceremony, which takes place during National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Members of the public are invited to attend, as well.

The Children's Memorial Flag honors each child lost to violence and is intended to draw public awareness to the continuing problem of abuse against children in our nation. The Flag—a red field with blue, paper doll-like figures of children holding hands and one red figure with a chalk outline depicting the thousands of children lost to violence each year in the United States—was created by a 16-year-old Alameda County, California student. The Child Welfare League of America (<http://www.cwla.org/default.htm>), a national organization whose mission is to ensure the safety and well-being of children and families, is the sponsor of the event.

“Violence against children is one of the most disturbing crimes we face as a society,” Governor Gibbons said. “It’s essential that we confront this problem through enforcement and prevention. I’d like to thank the Child Welfare League of America for heightening awareness about this terrible problem.”

In 2007, 21 children died as a result of violence in our State, compared to 14 reported cases the previous year. Willden said, “The increased number of cases is directly related to enhanced reporting of child fatalities and near fatalities as a result of legislation passed during the 2007 session. Our case review process has been improved and assessment of the causative factors of child deaths through better training and forensic review have led to better reporting of these statistics.”

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For the past three years, Governors of all fifty states have united in bipartisan support of National Children's Memorial Flag Day, issuing proclamations and participating in ceremonies to memorialize children. Governor Gibbons issued a proclamation in recognition of children lost in Nevada (<http://gov.state.nv.us/PROCs/2008/2008-04-25ChildrensMemorialFlagDay.htm>).

If you suspect child abuse, contact the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services at (775) 687-4943, or call the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-992-5757. Suspected child abuse can also be reported online at http://www.dcf.state.nv.us/DCFS_ReportSuspectedChildAbuse.htm.

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