



FOOTHILLS CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOOTHILLS CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER EARNS RE-ACCREDITATION FROM NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

National Children's Alliance recognizes Foothills Child Advocacy Center for its ongoing delivery of high quality and effective services to child abuse victims through accreditation

CHARLOTTESVILLE (February 2, 2017) – **Foothills Child Advocacy Center (Foothills) has been awarded re-accreditation by the National Children's Alliance following an extensive application and site review process.** As the accrediting agency for Children's Advocacy Centers (CAC) across the country, National Children's Alliance awards various levels of accreditation and membership to centers responding to allegations of child abuse in ways that are effective and efficient, and put the needs of child victims of abuse first. Accreditation is the highest level of membership with National Children's Alliance and denotes excellence in service provision.

Accredited CACs must undergo a re-accreditation process every five years to ensure that best practices are continually being applied. Foothills' re-accreditation this year reflects its commitment to providing evidence-based methods practice. Foothills was founded in 2006, as a result of the 2002-2004 study conducted by the Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families (CCF) task force that was charged with identifying ways to reduce the impact of abuse/neglect on children in the community. Foothills served its first child on April 12, 2006. Since then, Foothills has served more than 2,000 child victims and their families and provided these families more than 10,000 services, such as crisis intervention and referrals for mental health counseling.

“We want to express our gratitude to the thirteen agencies across the community who collaborate as a multi-disciplinary team to keep children safe, reduce their trauma, and promote their healing. The child advocacy center/multidisciplinary team model is a nationally recognized best practice for serving abused children – but it's the local team who puts this model into practice in the best possible way to serve child victims in our community,” said Cathee Johnson Phillips, Foothills' executive director. **“Our reaccreditation was achieved because of their dedication.”**

The Charlottesville/Albemarle Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) members include: Foothills; the Albemarle County and Charlottesville Police Departments, Child Protective Services, Commonwealth's Attorneys, and Victim-Witness Offices; Piedmont Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA); ReadyKids; Region Ten Community Services Board; the Sexual Assault Resource Agency (SARA); and the University of Virginia Forensic Nurse Examiners and Department of Pediatrics. Foothills is also a member of the MDTs in surrounding counties.

As an Accredited Member of National Children's Alliance, Foothills is dedicated to providing comprehensive, coordinated and compassionate services to victims of child abuse.

National Children's Alliance awards Accredited Membership based on a CAC's compliance with 10 national standards of accreditation to ensure effective, efficient and consistent delivery of services to child abuse victims. Accredited Members must utilize a functioning and effective Multidisciplinary Team approach to work collaboratively in child abuse investigation, prosecution, and treatment.

National Children's Alliance also considers standards regarding a center's cultural competency and diversity, forensic interviews, victim support and advocacy, medical evaluation, therapeutic intervention, and child focused setting.

“Foothills Child Advocacy Center is to be commended for its continued commitment to effectively serve victims of child abuse. As the national association and accrediting body for Children's Advocacy Centers across the country, our goal is to ensure that every victim of child abuse has access to high quality services that result from professional collaboration. By requiring Accredited Centers to undergo re-Accreditation every five years, we ensure that evidence-based practices are being implemented and the highest quality of service is being provided,” remarked Teresa Huizar, executive director of National Children's Alliance.

For more information about Foothills, visit www.foothillscac.org.

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Foothills Child Advocacy Center provides a coordinated system of effective response and intervention to children who have been victimized. The center's goal is to minimize trauma for children, promote their healing, and ensure child safety. Foothills works to fulfill these goals through the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)/Forensic Assessment and Public Education and Outreach Programs. Through the MDT/Forensic Assessment Program, Foothills (1) coordinates a team of 14 local government and nonprofit agencies to increase communication and mutual accountability, reduce duplication of services, and help ensure that children are safe and that their needs are met; (2) conducts coordinated forensic interviews that reduce the number of times a child is interviewed and so reduces the child's trauma; and (3) provides non-offending caregivers ongoing support to help them provide safe, healing environments for the children. Through education and outreach, Foothills increases community understanding of the ways to prevent and stop abuse. Read more about the education and outreach program at <http://www.foothillscac.org/resources.html>.

National Children's Alliance is the national association and accrediting body for the over 750 children's advocacy centers serving each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Dedicated to helping local communities respond to allegations of child abuse in ways that are effective and efficient, and put the needs of child victims of abuse first, National Children's Alliance provides support and advocacy to its accredited membership, as well as numerous developing centers, multidisciplinary teams and child abuse professionals around the country, and the world. As the national authority on multidisciplinary approaches to supporting child victims of abuse, the purpose of National Children's Alliance is to empower local communities to provide comprehensive, coordinated and compassionate services to victims of child abuse. Founded in 1998, National Children's Alliance provides accreditation opportunities, financial assistance, training, technical assistance, research and education to communities, child abuse professionals and children's advocacy centers throughout the United States in support of child abuse intervention, advocacy and prevention. www.nationalchildrensalliance.org