



FOOTHILLS CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Stewards of Children Workshop Will Help Adults to Protect Children from Sexual Abuse

(CHARLOTTESVILLE) February 12, 2014 – The Foothills Child Advocacy Center (Foothills) is offering Stewards of Children, a free public training that empowers adults to protect children on Thursday, Feb. 27, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Albemarle County Office Building, 1600 5th St. Extended, Room B.

To register, call Jane Tirrell, the Foothills administrative coordinator, at 434-971-7233, extension 0, or via e-mail at jtfoothills@gmail.com, by Monday, Feb. 24.

The Stewards of Children program is designed for every adult that is concerned about the safety and well-being of children and educates them to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. The program believes and teaches that child safety is the responsibility of adults and gives adults the tools necessary to protect children.

The program is ideal for training staff and volunteers of organizations that serve children and adolescents; it is also appropriate for parents, grandparents, and any adults who care about children.

The training will be conducted by Rachel Thielmann, the Foothills prevention education specialist, who is an authorized Stewards of Children facilitator with Darkness to Light.

Foothills has offered this program since 2010, and more than 80 sessions have been held, with more than 1,300 persons completing the training.

About Foothills

Foothills provides a coordinated system of effective response and intervention to children who have been victimized. The center's goal is to minimize trauma, promote healing, ensure child safety, and hold perpetrators accountable. Foothills conducts forensic interviews with alleged child crime victims, and non-offending caretakers receive crisis intervention and referrals for services and ongoing support. Foothills is an accredited member of the National Children's Alliance (NCA) and primarily serves the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle.

Through a grant from BAMA Works, Foothills conducts courtesy forensic interviews for surrounding counties that do not have a CAC of their own.

Foothills works with a team of professionals in Charlottesville and Albemarle dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators and to the support and treatment of child victims and their non-offending caretakers. The multidisciplinary team (MDT) meets monthly to communicate and collaborate on child maltreatment cases. Cases are reviewed beginning with the victim's initial outcry through investigation, treatment, and prosecution. Communication within the team reduces duplication and keeps victims from falling through the cracks. MDT partners include: Foothills; Charlottesville and Albemarle Child Protective Services; Charlottesville and Albemarle Police Departments; Charlottesville and Albemarle Victim/Witness Services; Charlottesville and Albemarle Commonwealth's Attorney's Offices; Piedmont Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA); Sexual Assault Resource Agency (SARA); Children, Youth and Family Services (CYFS); Region 10 Community Services Board; and UVA Forensic Nurse Examiners.

Foothills provides education about child advocacy and the multidisciplinary team model to the community. Foothills sponsors free trainings including *Stand Up For Kids!*, a program which educates mandated reporters, and *Stewards of Children*, a program which provides adults with the knowledge of how to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.

Foothills staff includes Cathee Johnson Phillips, executive director; Jennifer Kline, program coordinator; Ashley Cinalli, LCSW, case manager; Tirrell and Thielmann.

For more information, please visit the center's Web site at <http://www.foothillscac.org/> or call 434-971-7233.