



FOOTHILLS CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER
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Resources Are Available to Help Prevent or Stop Child Abuse

(CHARLOTTESVILLE) February 11, 2014 – The Foothills Child Advocacy Center, located at 1106 East High Street, offers workshops and other resources to help concerned parents, grandparents, educators, and others to prevent and stop child abuse. *Stewards of Children* is a training program that empowers adults to protect children from sexual abuse. *Stand Up For Kids!*, offered in collaboration with local Child Protective Services, is a training for mandated reporters on how to recognize and respond to all types of child abuse and neglect. Foothills provides these and other trainings free of charge for organizations and groups upon request; call 434-971-7233.

Foothills also offers tips for protecting children through its Web site, found at <http://www.foothillscac.org/>, and printed brochures, for example, “A Parent’s Guide to Protecting Your Child from Sexual Abuse.” The brochures are available upon request or can be downloaded from its Web site.

About *Stewards of Children*

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 is 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 *Stand Up For Kids!*

As previously noted, *Stand Up For Kids!*, offered in collaboration with local Child Protective Services, is a training for mandated reporters on how to recognize and respond to all types of child abuse and neglect. Virginia mandated reporters include individuals 18 and older who are associated with, employed by, or a volunteer with a public organization responsible for the care, custody, or control of children; private sports organization or team; public or private day camps, youth centers, or youth recreation programs; and public or private institution of higher

learning. Since January 2013, 581 mandated reporters from 20 organizations have completed the *Stand Up For Kids!* training.

About Foothills

Foothills was established in 2006 as a not-for-profit, accredited agency designed to provide a coordinated system of effective response and intervention to children who have been victimized. Foothills primarily serves Charlottesville and Albemarle County and is an accredited member of the National Children's Alliance (NCA). Through a grant from BAMA Works, Foothills also conducts courtesy forensic interviews for surrounding counties that do not have a child advocacy center of their own. Foothills is one of only 15 child advocacy centers in Virginia, and the majority of Virginia's counties and cities do not have access to such a center or the services it provides.

Foothills' goals are to minimize trauma, promote healing, ensure child safety, and hold perpetrators accountable. Foothills provides a safe place for child victims and their non-offending family members/caregivers to meet with Charlottesville/Albemarle Child Protective Services and Law Enforcement staff for forensic interviews and crisis intervention. The child is interviewed at Foothills by a professional who is specially trained in child forensic interviewing, and the non-offending caretakers receive crisis intervention and referrals for ongoing services that support the child or family. More information regarding this process can be found on our Web site, at www.foothillscac.org.

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.

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

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