

Children's Breakfast Launches A County-Wide Prevent-A-Thon



On March 30, 2011 The Children's Advocacy Center and Children's Protection Council hosted a Children's Breakfast to introduce Prevent Now, a community prevention initiative and to launch our Prevent-A-Thon. The breakfast brought together 127 leaders from our faith, business and civic communities. Attendees learned about the problem of child sexual abuse, the human and economic impact for our community, and best of all that we can prevent child sexual abuse.



Catawba County's Prevent-A-Thon will provide a significant focus on the prevention of child sexual abuse through the evidence based *Stewards of Children* training curriculum. Our goal is to train 6,000 adults over the next five years. By training 6,000 adults we will reach "tipping point" which means we will begin to see behavior changes in adults that will ultimately result in a change in societal values.

At the breakfast we received commitments from over 65 churches and businesses to provide a venue for the training. This will allow us to saturate the community with training opportunities at various times and locations throughout the county during the month of August. To learn more about training locations, dates, and times please contact Adrienne Opdyke at 828-465-7665. If you want to offer your site as a training venue please let Adrienne know. Thanks to a grant from the Catawba County United Way – training will be at no cost to the citizens of Catawba County.

We are so thankful to Catawba Valley Medical Center, Hickory Springs Manufacturing, the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, and Catawba County Partnership for Children for sponsoring The Children's Breakfast.



Ten volunteers from across the county receive training to become *Stewards of Children* facilitators for the Prevent-A-Thon. This training was made possible by the Catawba County United Way. Thanks to Conover PD for the use of their training facility!

Children's Protection Council Promotes Prevention in April



Pinwheels for Prevention

Children's Protection Council volunteers planted Pinwheels for Prevention gardens to promote April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. In addition to the CAC lawn, pinwheel gardens were planted at Hickory Police Headquarters, the Patrick Beaver Memorial Library, the Conover YMCA, the Hickory YMCA, and the Department of Social Services. Not only throughout Catawba County but throughout the United States, the pinwheel serves as the new national symbol for child abuse prevention. It is a reflection of hope, health, and safety.

A Public Proclamation

To kick-off April as Child Abuse Prevention Month elected officials from Catawba County and local municipalities gather to pledge their support to keep children safe.

L to R: Mayor Robert Smyre of Maiden, Mayor Lee Moritz of Conover, Mayor Rudy Wright of Hickory. Attending but not pictured: County Commissioner Dan Hunsucker and Mayor David Morrow of Claremont. Chief Don Brown represented Newton for Mayor Robert Mullinax.



Catawba County Board of Commissioners Chair, Kitty Barnes



Representatives from local law enforcement, the D.A.'s Office, and the Dept. of Social Services joined with the Children's Protection Council and the Children's Advocacy Center to demonstrate their support.



Chief Don Brown of Newton PD

April Events Culminate with the Hancock-Settlemyre Banquet



L to R: Millie Hancock Schumpert, Jean Settlemyre Tashman, Pam Brooks at the 2011 Hancock-Settlemyre Award Banquet.

The banquet was established in 1980 in honor of Dr. Millie Hancock Schumpert, retired Hickory physician, and Jean Settlemyre Tashman, retired administrator of Frye Regional Medical Center. The award was named for the women as a way to recognize their contributions to the community in promoting awareness and prevention of child abuse and neglect. Pictured with Millie and Jean is Pam Brooks, a long time friend and Social Work Supervisor at Catawba County DSS. Each year an individual, community group, or business who has worked to enhance the quality of family in Catawba County receives the Hancock-Settlemyre award. This year's winner was Courtney Russell, student counselor at Viewmont Elementary School. Each year a handmade quilt is presented

during the Hancock-Settlemyre Banquet. The quilt is made from T-shirts with each shirt bearing the name of a child who died in North Carolina as a result of abuse or neglect. This year the quilt was crafted by Linda Henson, mother of Karen Brown who is the Mental Health Therapist at the Children's Advocacy Center. Each panel holds a T-shirt made by members of the Hickory High Art Club. During the presentation of the quilt, Linda told the attendees, "I wanted to create a quilt which represented a symbol of peace. I showed the quilt to my quilt guild and there were lots of tears shed



Last year's Hancock-Settlemyre Award Winner, Cyndy Benson, presents quilt to Courtney Russell.



Quilter Linda Henson explains her design.

as I told them about the quilt." Linda sewed the words "In the Arms of Angels" into the top border, and angels are beautifully stitched all around the window pane pattern.

CAC Affiliations



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Director's Update

I have the wonderful opportunity to facilitate our non-offending parent support and education group. As the name indicates the group is made up of parents or another caregiver who is now left with the difficult task of picking up the pieces in the aftermath of child sexual abuse. What we know through research and direct observation of the children we serve is that a supportive parent is the most important person in a child victim's journey to healing. It has been an honor to journey with these moms, dads, grandmothers and other caretakers as they learn how to best support their child as well as take care of themselves. For these women and men it is a difficult journey – their child has been sexually perpetrated and more times than not – by someone they trusted. So we spend ten weeks learning and talking – we learn facts about child sexual abuse but mostly we talk about how to support child victims of sexual abuse. One of our volunteers, who co-facilitates the group with me, said something during one of the sessions that took me and the group by surprise. She told the group, "You are the lucky ones." I snapped my head in her direction, and just as I was about to say, "What do you mean, lucky ones?" this wise woman continued to explain how so many children never tell and they are the children who grow up to be one of the statistics we read about. "But your child told, no matter who they told or how they told...they told. The secret is out. With your support and with the help of the CAC staff your child will be ok. They do not have to grow up to be a statistic." I have heard Kelly say that a dozen times to as many groups over the past four years. I never tire of hearing her words. Children can and do heal from child sexual abuse, and each time I hear Kelly say these words I am reminded of why we exist and of the important work we do. We offer a ray of sunshine, a ray of hope to the children who are brave to tell their story. Thanks to all of you who volunteer in any capacity to help offer hope.

Deb

You Can Support the CAC

If you would like to support the work of the CAC in helping abused children, please send this form and your check written to the CAC in the enclosed envelope. Thank you!



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1007 First Ave. S
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I will support the Children's Advocacy Center with my tax deductible gift of : \$ _____

My gift is in Honor Memory of
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Name: _____

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- I would like information about hosting a speaker.
- I am interested in volunteering for the CAC.
- I would like to receive Email Newsletters at _____

Dinner, Dancing, Diamonds - Denim & Diamonds 2011



Clockwise from top left corner: Deborah Johnson introduces the staff after Karen Brown has explained her work through the eyes of a child; Board Chair, Mary Jo Wiley and her husband Tom; Brooke and Lauren DeLeary performed "Voiceless" to honor children in need of advocacy; Events Committee Chair, Candace Newman enjoying a job well done; Board



Member, Judge Robert A. Mullinax, Jr. and his wife, Kim; the ladies of the Jewelry Exchange donated a diamond for the champagne diamond raffle; autographed Crosby, Stills, Nash, & Young guitar in custom case crafted by Jan Brown pictured with Board Treasurer and winner of the CSNY guitar in the silent auction, Judy White.



People sharing their time and talents to help the CAC

As part of his senior project Jay Johnson attended the Darkness to Light training, raised funds for the Prevent-A-Thon, and sponsored a toy drive. The Board of Directors commended Jay for his commitment to the CAC and thanked him for his support.



Laura Foster of Kohl's and a member of the Children's Protection Council with La'Courtney Setzer, intern at the Children's Advocacy Center, help out at the Children's Breakfast.

Kohl's employees often volunteer their time to help at CAC events. Here they are greeting attendees of the Children's Breakfast.



Sophia Purut is working hard to obtain her Girl Scout Silver Award by making blankets for the children that come to the Children's Advocacy Center. Sophia's parents, Rita and Cemil Purut, are understandably proud of Sophia's generosity of spirit in serving other children that are going through a difficult time. Sophia makes her blankets out of warm and cozy fleece in patterns for girls and boys. She is pictured here working on a volleyball blanket. We appreciate Sophia donating her time and energy in helping the CAC to help children. Good work, Sophia! You demonstrate that a person is never too young to serve others.

If you would like to know how you might help the CAC please call us at 828-465-9296.

Meet Our New Board Members



Chad Conkling has lived in the Hickory area for 13 years. He moved from Raleigh to open The Peddler Restaurant where he was the Proprietor for ten years. Chad changed his career path in 2007 to the Insurance/Financial industry where he is currently working with Northwestern Mutual Financial Network. Chad has been married to Stephanie for six years; they have three children. Stephanie is a Speech Language Pathologist specializing in children's needs. Chad has served on the Stewardship Board for Lakeview Baptist and taught a couples' Sunday school class for several years.



Stacy Briggs, M.D. is a pediatric pulmonologist practicing at Wake Forest Baptist

Medical Center. In response to the plague of our modern society of child victimization - including child abduction, school bullying, and child abuse she is opening a local branch of the national child empowerment organization, "**Kidpower**". Kidpower teaches children positive, practical, and effective ways to think, move, and speak to stay safe in challenging personal safety situations. Child and parent workshops are available: kidpower-charlotte@kidpower.org



Vickie Martin, founder and Managing Partner of Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs P.A., is a

leader in tax and audit services. Vickie has much experience in estate and gift tax planning and preparation, individual taxes, and nonprofit organizations. She earned a Bachelor of Science with Honors from Lenoir Rhyne College in 1979 and has become a respected community and industry leader. She has served on many boards in Alexander County and Catawba County over the past 25 years.

We are very fortunate to have the commitment of these community leaders who care about advocating for children in Catawba County.

We Appreciate Our Sponsors



Sue G. Millholland

Thank You, Tom & Michael

A sincere and heart-felt thank you to Dr. Tom Foster and Michael McNally, President of the Burke County Chamber of Commerce, for their service to the Children's Advocacy Center. Tom and Michael are both completing their terms of service as At-Large members of the CAC's Board of Directors. Their dedication to children has been inspiring to all of us and we will miss them.

Mary Jo Wiley

Message from our Board Chair

As our fiscal year comes to a close I'd like to express my appreciation to those who have supported the Children's Advocacy Center and provide that "ray of hope for abused children". While our community and country continued to struggle with economic challenges, the Executive Director and Staff of the CAC effectively managed the demand for an increasing number of client interviews, medical exams and mental health services. It is through their continued hard work and dedication that they were able to provide these critical services to a growing number of children and families in need. Thank you to this wonderful group of professionals for their service and commitment to our community!

I'd also like to thank the Board of Directors for their support and leadership in facing the present day realities of running a non-profit organization. I've been impressed with the manner in which our Board has worked as a team to build efficiencies into the partnering organizations with the goal of better serving our clients. With the Board's support the CAC sponsored a "Children's Breakfast" this spring. During this event our community leaders were briefed on "Prevent Now", an initiative proven to prevent the epidemic of child sexual abuse and the effects it has not only on victims, but the entire community. Business and faith communities have pledged their support for our Prevent-A-Thon, which will take place during the month of August. During this time the Darkness to Light Prevention training is being offered free to the public at various locations throughout Catawba County. Visit our website, sign up for this free training and learn how you could drastically reduce the chances of a child being sexually abused. Thank you to the Board of Directors and Staff for leading the way and making this "Prevent Now" initiative a reality.

Last but not least, thank you to those who support the CAC through donations and attendance at our fund raisers. Without your contributions this organization could not continue to provide services to those who need it most. I ask for your continued support and invite you to learn more about the CAC by scheduling a tour of the Center, taking part in our Prevent-A-Thon and attending our events!

Best wishes, *Mary Jo Wiley*

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